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JAMES

THE FATALIST

AND

HIS MASTER.

VOL. I.

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AND

HIS MASTER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF DIDEROT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO THE

MEMORY

OF

DIDEROT.

O DIDEROT! how many days have already elapsed since thy genius has been extinguished, since the obscurity of the tomb has shaded thy lifeless ashes! And of all the friends to whom thy nights were consecrated, on whom were lavished the stores of thy talents and the riches of thy imagination, none has yet attempted to rear to thee a monument worthy of the gratitude due

from friendship, from thy own age and from future times!

Yet where is the man of letters whose panegyric can be more interesting to be transmitted to posterity! It is true that Diderot made no discovery which has extended the sphere of our knowledge; perhaps he has left behind him no work which can place him in the rank of our orators, our philosophers, our poets; but I dare appeal to those, who with abilities to appreciate his merit, had the happiness of his acquaintance, whether he nevertheless was not one of the most astonishing phænomena of the power of wit and of genius?

If there are men of whom the honour of the human mind is concerned

in

in preserving a faithful remembrance, they are those who possessed real claims to public esteem and admiration, but whom particular circumstances, I know not what fatality attached to their destiny, never permitted to develope all the force, all the extent of their faculties. What eulogium of Virgil could add more to the idea of him than the *Eneid* inspires? What panegyric of Racine could give a stronger conception of his genius than the *Phædra* or *Athalia* exhibits? But how many sages are there equally honoured in the ages in which they lived and by which they were followed, whose memory must have perished had it not been preserved by the homage of their cotemporaries.

It is not thy eulogium, O Diderot, that I can venture to undertake.—

Scarcely dare I flatter myself that my feeble talents can here collect a few wreaths worthy to deck thy funeral urn; but I too, often experienced the happiness of being admitted to the modest asylum in which thou wert concealed; I too, have often shared the precious gifts which thy genius diffused around thee with a profusion so easy and so generous, with a warmth so sweet and so interesting. My gratitude shall not rest upon vain panegyrics, but at least I shall attempt to express what I have seen, what I have felt; and those of thy friends who shall behold this feeble sketch will perhaps find in it some features of thy pictures pourtrayed with fidelity.

The artist who wished to find a model for the head of Aristotle, or of Plato,

Plato would have scarcely met with a modern head more worthy of his studies than that of the late Diderot. His brow large, open and gently rounded, bore the imposing image of a mind vast, luminous and fertile. Our great physiognomist Lavater imagined that he discovered in it the traces of a character timid and of little enterprise; and this conclusion, formed solely upon the portraits which he may have seen of him, has always appeared to us to be the opinion of a very nice observer. His nose possessed a masculine beauty; the contour of his upper eye-lid was full of delicacy; the usual expression of his eyes sensible and sweet; but when his mind began to be animated and warmed they seemed to sparkle with fire; his mouth breathed an interesting mixture of archness, grace

and good nature. Whatever vacuity he might in other respects have in his mien, there was naturally in the cast of his head, and particularly when he spoke with action, a great deal of nobleness, force and dignity. It seemed that enthusiasm was become the natural turn of expression of his voice, of his soul, and of all his faculties. In a cold and tranquil state of mind sometimes might be discovered, constraint, awkwardness, timidity, even a kind of affectation. Till his thoughts had transported him beyond his ordinary feelings he was not himself, he was not Diderot.

In order to form some idea of the extent and the fertility of his mind, it is not sufficient to cast a rapid glance, I will not say over every thing

thing which he has done, but over every thing which the public knows of him. *

* We have not spoken of his first essays, the translation of Lord Shaftsbury's treatise of *Merit* and *Virtue*, that of the *History of Greece* by Stanyan, the *Dictionary of Medicine*, &c. &c. We shall only here advert to one part of his works which he has left in manuscript. His *James the Fatalist* and his *Religieuse*, are two romances; the first of which presents a great variety of traits and of ideas at once simple, new and original; the other is a grand picture, full of soul and passion, of the most lively strokes, and the moral tendency of which is the more striking from the extreme address which the author has employed to conceal it: in the end it turns out to be a most severe satire upon the licentiousness of the monastic life; and in the whole course of the work there is not one word which seems to be directed immediately to this object. His *Supplement to the Voyage of M. de Bougainville*, his *Conversations upon the Origin of Beings*, and several other dialogues of a moral

The same man who conceived the project of the most beautiful monu-

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and metaphysical nature shew with what ability he could combine the most abstract discussions with all the charms of the most lively and brilliant imagination. The speech of the chief of the Otaheitans in *the Supplement to the Voyage of M. de Bougainville* is one of the most beautiful pieces of savage eloquence which exists in any language. *The Plan of a New University* which he was desired to make out by the Empress of Russia and his reflexions upon the last work of M. Helvetius are of all his writings those perhaps in which there are to be found most method and reasoning; he has displayed in these, particularly in the former, vast knowledge and learning. His *Salons* or his criticisms on various pictures in the Louvre will certainly not prove satisfactory to the greatest part of artists; but who has ever spoken of the arts and of real talents with a more tender sensibility or with a more sublime enthusiasm? and notwithstanding a number of judgments which can only

have

ment which any age has ever raised to the glory, and for the instruction of mankind, who executed a great part of it himself, has composed two theatrical pieces quite of an original kind, and which the chastest taste cannot dispute to be great dramatic efforts, in a style full of animation and passion; the same man to whom we owe so many subtle metaphysical essays in his *Letters upon the Blind, the Deaf, and the Dumb*, in his *Philosophical Thoughts*, in his *Interpretation of Nature*, in the number of articles which he has furnished for the *Encyclopédie*, upon the History of Ancient Philosophy, has given a more clear, exact, and detailed description than any

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have been dictated by an inflamed and prejudiced imagination, we find the work replete with original views, and with observations equally juste, acute, and profound!

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that we were in possession of before, of all our arts and professions. There is no person certainly who does not know the perfection to which this sort of labour has since arrived; but can we forget that before Diderot there was not one page written upon the subject worthy of being read? The same man who has left us so many works replete with knowledge, philosophy, and learning; besides a collection of mathematical performances, which I have often heard quoted with praise by our first geometricians, has also composed stories and romances; he has written one in particular full of originality, of fancy, and of ludicrous incident; and it was with one of the best books upon morality extant in our language, his *Essay upon the Reigns of Claudius and Nero*, that he usefully terminated his literary career.

If

If we consider that so many works, and works of such a different nature are the productions of a single individual, who devoted to their composition only, the time which he could spare from that which was necessarily spent in procuring his own subsistence, and that of his family, or those moments which were left him by the importunity of strangers, the indiscretion of friends, and above all by the extreme indolence of his temper, we must confess that there are few persons indeed with so capacious a mind, or with a more extraordinary and a more copious facility of talent *,

* The eloquent *Apology of the Abbé de Prades*, one of the best polemical performances which has appeared this century, was the work of a few days; the sublime *Eulogy of Richardson* was the production of a morning; and he scarcely spent a fortnight in writing the *Bijoux Indiscrets*.

The

The genius of Diderot resembles those sons of a family who, from being born and reared in the lap of plenty, suppose that the source of their wealth is inexhaustible; and of consequence affix no bounds to their caprices, and establish no order in their expences. To what degree of superiority might not this genius have arrived, had it been properly cultivated; or to what enterprise might not its powers have been adequate, had they been directed exclusively to one object; had the time and the exertions, which were prodigally lavished on any one who requested the aid of his counsel and of his understanding, been appropriated solely to the improvement of his own works! What he did at first from good nature, from habit, from I know not what propensity of character, he did afterwards from

from necessity, from principle: the following passage shews how neatly in this view he has depicted his own character: "I am not robbed of my life," says he, "I give it away; and what can I do "better than to grant a portion of it to "him who thinks it of sufficient value "to ask it as a boon? . . . . The important point is not if the thing be done "by me or by another, but if the thing "be done, and well done, whether by "a good or a bad man. . . . They will "not praise me for it, I grant, either "now or after I am no more; but I "shall value myself upon it, and they "will esteem me of course. Benefi-"cence, the recompence of which is "sure, is not a bad exchange for cele-"brity, which cannot always be ob-"tained, and which is never acquired "without inconvenience. . . . Perhaps I "impose

" impose upon myself by specious rea-
" sonings, and I am only a spendthrift of
" my time by setting little value upon
" it; I am only prodigal of what I des-
" pise; they ask it of me as nothing, and
" I grant it as such *."

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* It was his being employed for two whole years in the *Philosophical and Political History of the two Indies* that sustained his courage and his patience during that time. Who does not know that nearly one-third of this great work is the production of his pen? We have seen him compose a considerable part of it. He himself used to be astonished at the boldness with which he made his friend speak. *But who*, said he, *will dare to put his name to this? I*, replied the Abbé, *I tell you to proceed.* What man of letters does not easily recognize in the book *de l'Esprit*, and in the *System of Nature*, all the fine pages which are, and which can only be, the production of Diderot? . . . . It would be an invidious task to attempt a more complete enumeration of his works, and to vex those manes which we wish to honour.

May

(May we not consider what follows as a saying of remorse escaped from the conscience of a man of letters?) "This "must be so, since I should blame in "others what I approve in myself."

The circumstances, and the habits of life, which these circumstances occasion, have doubtless a great influence upon the character, the extent, and the bounds of our faculties; but nature herself often modifies them in a way so peculiar, that it would be absurd to ascribe them to any other origin. If ever there was a capacity of intellect, formed for receiving and improving every idea embraced by the circle of human knowledge, it was that of Diderot; his head was naturally the most *encyclopédique* of any that ever existed. Metaphysical subtlety, profound calculation, deep

erudition, poetical conception, a taste for the arts and antiquity; however diversified the objects might be, his attention applied to them with the same energy, with the same interest, and with the same facility; but his thoughts one after another rapt him to such an elevated pitch of passion, that it seemed rather as if they were masters of his understanding than as if his understanding was master of them. His ideas were stronger than he, they carried him along with such an irresistible impulse so to speak, that it was impossible for him either to arrrest their progress, or to regulate their course.

When I recall the memory of Diderot, the immense variety of his ideas, the astonishing multiplicity of his knowledge, the sudden transports, the fervour

fervour, the impetuous tumult of his imagination, all the charms and all the wildness of his conversation, I venture to compare his soul to nature, in the view in which he himself beheld it, rich, fertile, abounding in germs of every kind, sweet and savage, mild and majestic, simple and sublime, but without any ruling principle, without a governor, and without a God.

I am not here disposed to quarrel with the infidelity of the age in which I live: Superstition has been the cause of so many evils to men, that we may be thankful Reason has at last broken its yoke: but, however willingly I pardon scepticism in any man, I think it would have been desirable for Diderot's reputation, that he had not been an atheist, or that he had supported the

character with less zeal. The obstinate war which he considered himself as obliged to wage against God, made him lose many of the most precious moments of his life, often diverted him from the culture of literature and of the arts, and, above all, made him neglect the talent in the exercise of which he was fitted to acquire celebrity. He made himself a Philosopher; Nature intended him to be an Orator or a Poet. Nor is it certain even, that, in other times, and in other circumstances, he might not have succeeded as a Father of the Church. He would have been as well qualified, however, for beating the tracks of Luther and of Calvin, had he been capable of a more elevated deportment, and if there had not been as much weakness in his character

racter as there was firmness and energy in his mind.

All the virtues, all the estimable qualities, which are not very complex in their character, and the exercise of which does not require great constancy of temper, were natural to Diderot. He was accustomed to forget himself as much as the great part of men think about themselves. He was as much pleased with rendering himself useful to others, as most men are satisfied with the enjoyment of an agreeable and salutary exercise. All the ingenuity and activity of mind which men usually exert in making their own fortunes, he employed in obliging the first person who came in his way, often permitting himself to extend his liberality beyond the necessary bounds. A very

complicated intrigue, when he thought it would conduct him to his object, communicated a new interest to the pleasure he felt in doing a service. Timid and aukward in the management of whatever related to himself, he was subject to no such embarrassment in conducting the affairs of others. *Is he good? Is he bad?* is the title of a small comedy, in which he meant to pourtray his own character. He had, in short, more sweetness than real goodness, sometimes the malice and anger of a child, but, upon the whole, an inexhaustible fund of good nature.

He was disposed, with much sincerity, to love all his neighbours, till he had the strongest reasons for hating and despising them; even when he had the justest cause of complaint, ten to one but

but he forgot it. It was necessary, indeed, that he should do so, for, whenever he seriously engaged to recollect a thing, he had laid down a rule to take a note of it in some memorandum books which he kept for the purpose; but these memorandums lay concealed in a corner of his bureau; and the whim of consulting this singular deposit seldom tormented him; I only saw him once recur to it, when he wished to tell me the wrongs which he had suffered from the unfortunate John-James.

Diderot conversed more with his own ideas than with men. Though an enthusiastic supporter of materialism, it may nevertheless be said, that he was a most decided idealist in his mode of thinking and of living: he was so in spite of himself, from the invincible

ascendant of his character and of his imagination. The greatest attraction which the society in which he was accustomed to live had for him, was its being the only theatre in which the natural fire of his genius could get full scope to burn. When age had cooled the fervour of his mind, he became indifferent to society; he was often more hurt than pleased with it, and returned with joy to his retreat. His books, which afforded a pretext for the favours conferred upon him by Catharine II. and the enjoyment of which she secured to him with so much grace and bounty, his books, some solitary walks, the chit-chat of an intimate acquaintance, particularly of his daughter, then became his most pleasant relaxations. This daughter, so tenderly and so deservedly beloved, was his delight and consola-

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tion till the last moment of his life; blessed with her society, he supported with patience, and invariable serenity of mind, the protracted sufferings, and the painful *ennui* of a disease, the issue of which he long foresaw without fear or dismay.

JAMES

THE

FATALIST

AND HIS

MASTER.

HOW did they meet? By chance like other people. What were their names? What signifies it to you. From what part of the world did they come? From the place they left last. Whither were they going? Must people then always know where they go? For what sayings were they

they remarkable? The Master said nothing particular, and James used to say that his captain was wont to repeat, that all the good and the evil which befalls us here below was decreed on high.

MASTER.

It is a grand apothegm this.

JAMES.

My captain would add that every ball that was fired from a musquet had its billet.

MASTER.

And he was right.....

After a short pause James exclaimed —Devil take the inn-keeper and his inn!

MASTER.

MASTER.

Why send your neighbour to the devil? This is not like a christian.

JAMES.

Why? because while I got drunk with his bad wine I forgot to take our horses to water. My father observes it and turns angry. I shake my head; he takes a cudgel and rubs down my shoulders not with all the tenderness in the world. A regiment was passing by on its route to the camp at Fontenoy, and I enlist in disgust. We arrive and the engagement takes place.

MASTER.

And you received a ball with your address.

JAMES.

JAMES.

You have guessed it; a shot in the knee; and God knows the good and the bad adventures to which this shot has given rise. They are just as closely connected with each other as the links of a chain. Without this shot, for instance, I believe I should neither have been in love nor a cripple all my life.

MASTER.

You have then been in love?

JAMES.

What though I have?

MASTER.

And in consequence of a shot too.—

JAMES.

In consequence of a shot.

MASTER.

MASTER.

You never told me a word of this.

JAMES.

True, I never did.

MASTER.

Why so ?

JAMES.

Why because it could be told neither sooner nor later.

MASTER.

And is the moment of communicating the history of these amours arrived ?

JAMES.

Who knows that it is ?

MASTER.

MASTER.

At all adventures begin. . . . . .

James began the history of his amours. It was after dinner. It was drowsy time of day, and his Master fell asleep. Night surprised them in the middle of the fields, and they lost their way. Conceive the Master then in a terrible passion, and horse-whipping his Valet without mercy, while the poor devil observed between every stroke, "This one too it seems was decreed on high"

You see, reader, that I am in a fine way, and that I have it in my power to make you wait a year, two years, three years, for the story of James's amours,

by separating him from his Master and making each of them encounter all the dangers I please. What hinders me from marrying the Master and making him a cuckold? from embarking James for the Isles? and conducting his Master to the same place? from bringing them both to France in the same vessel? How easy is it to invent stories! But both of them will get off with spending a bad night, and you merely for this short delay.

Dawn appeared. Conceive them again mounted upon their horses and pursuing their journey.—And where were they going? This is the second time you have asked me the question; and this is the second time that I answer, what is that to you? If I explain the object of their journey,

ney, farewell to James's amours. . . . . They proceeded some time on their way in silence. When they had both a little recovered from their chagrin the Master said to his Valet: Well then, James, how far had we got with your amours?

JAMES.

I believe we had got the length of the defeat of the enemy's army. They endeavoured to save themselves. They were pursued. Every one consulted his own safety. I remained upon the field of battle, buried under the number of the dead and wounded, which was prodigious. Next day I was placed, along with a dozen of others, upon a cart, in order to be conducted to one of our hospitals. Ah! sir, I do not believe

lieve that there is any wound more severe than one on the knee.

MASTER.

Let us proceed, however: James, you are mistaken.

JAMES.

No indeed, Sir, I am not mistaken: there are in that spot I know not how many bones, tendons, and other things, which are distinguished by, I cannot tell what names . . . . . .

A country looking man who followed them, with a girl whom he carried behind him, and had listened to their conversation, took up the subject, saying, the Gentleman is right.... It is not ascertained to whom this expression of *the Gentleman* was addressed; but it was not well

received by James and by his Master. James said to the person who interfered thus indiscreetly in the conversation, How come you to introduce your remarks upon this affair ?—I only obtrude myself upon a point of my profession ; I am a surgeon at your service, and I am going to demonstrate to you, that . . . . . The woman whom he carried behind him, said to him,. Good Mr. Doctor, let us pursue our way, and leave these Gentlemen, who have no taste for demonstrations. No, replied the surgeon, I wish to demonstrate to them, and I will demonstrate . . . . . and, in the act of turning himself round to demonstrate, he pushes against his companion, makes her lose her balance, and throws her to the ground, with one of her feet entangled in the skirts of his dress, and her petti-

coats

coats turned over her head. James dismounts, extricates the foot of this poor creature, and puts down her petticoats. I don't know whether he began with smoothing her petticoats, or disentangling her foot; but if you could judge of this woman's situation by her cries, she certainly was grievously wounded. And James's Master said to the surgeon, See what you have done by your eagerness to demonstrate; and the Surgeon returned, See what it is to have refused to attend to my demonstration . . . . . Meanwhile James addressed the woman, either in her fallen state, or after she had got up again, Comfort yourself, my good woman; it was neither your own fault, nor the fault of Mr. the Doctor, nor mine, nor that of my Master. It is because it was decreed on high, that, upon this day, on this

very road, at the present hour, Mr. the Doctor should choose to prattle, that my Master and I should be a little cross, that you should get a contusion on the head, and that we should see your . . . .

What might not this adventure grow to in my hands, should I take a fancy to tease you? I might give a great deal of importance to this woman; I might make her the niece of the Rector of the neighbouring village; I might set all the peasants in it by the ears; I might prepare stories of battles and of loves; for, in fact, this country girl, under her plain attire, was very pretty. James and his Master did not fail to perceive it. Love does not always wait for so seducing an opportunity. Why should not James fall in love a second time? Why

Why should he not a second time be the rival, and the successful rival too, of his Master? And how do you know that they had been in this situation already? What! always at your questions: you have no inclination, then, that James should continue the story of his amours? Once for all, pray explain what you would have me do. Will this afford you pleasure, then, or will it not? If it will give you satisfaction, let us again mount the woman on the crupper behind her conductor; allow them to proceed on their journey, and return to our travellers. Upon this occasion it was James who first took up the conversation, and said to his Master,

Observe what is the way of the world. You who never were wounded in the

course of your life, and who know nothing of what it is to receive a shot on the knee, will persist in maintaining to me, who have had my knee bruised to pieces, and have been a cripple these twenty years . . . .

MASTER.

You may be in the right. But it is owing to this impertinent Surgeon that you are still upon the waggon with your comrades, yet far from the hospital, far from being cured, and far from falling in love.

JAMES.

Whatever you may choose to think of the matter, the pain of my knee was excessive: it was sadly encreased by the hardness of the carriage, by the ruggedness of the roads, and at every jolt I uttered most piercing cries.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Because it was decreed on high that you should cry?

JAMES.

Assuredly: I had bled to death, and all had been over with me, if our cart, the last of the line, had not stopped at the door of a cottage. I requested to come down, and I was laid upon the ground. A young woman, who was standing at the door of the cottage, went in, and almost immediately returned with a glass and a bottle of wine. I drank one or two glasses in haste. The carts which preceded ours drove on. They were going to replace me among my companions, when, clinging close to the clothes of this woman, and to every thing around me, I protested that I would not mount again,

and that, if I was to die, I preferred meeting death where I was, rather than two leagues farther on. As I uttered these last words, I fell into a swoon. When I recovered from this state, I found myself undressed, lying on a bed which occupied one of the corners of the cottage, and beside me a peasant, the owner of the place, his wife, the person who had given me the assistance, and some little children. The woman had dipped the corner of her apron in vinegar, and was rubbing my nose and temples.

MASTER.

Ah, wretch! ah, knave! .... Villain, I see you coming.

JAMES.

Master of mine, I believe you see nothing at all.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Is not this the woman with whom you are about to fall in love ?

JAMES.

And though I were to fall in love with her, what is there to be said on the subject ? Have people in their power to fall in love, or not to fall in love, as they please ? And, if people are in love, are they at liberty to act as if they were not ? Had this been decreed on high, whatever you have a mind to say to me, I too might have said to myself; I might have beat my breast, dashed my head against the wall, torn my hair, but things would neither have been better nor worse, and my benefactor had still been a cuckold.

MASTER.

MASTER.

But, reasoning in your way, there is no crime which may not be perpetrated without remorse.

JAMES.

More than once have I perplexed my brain with this objection; but notwithstanding this, in spite of all I can do, I always recur to the saying of my Captain—"All the good and the evil which "befalls us is decreed on high." Are you, Sir, acquainted with any means of erasing this decree. Can I help being myself? and, being myself, can I act otherwise than I do? Can I be at once myself and a different person? And, since I first came into the world, has any single moment occurred in which this has not held true? Preach as long as you please: your argments, perhaps, may be very good; but if it is decreed within

within me, or on high, that I should think them bad, pray what would you have me to do ?

MASTER.

I am musing a little upon something, and it is, whether your benefactor was to be cuckolded because it was decreed on high, or whether it was decreed on high because you were to make your benefactor a cuckold ?

JAMES.

Both these decrees were written, the one by the side of the other. Every thing was decreed at once. It is just like a large roll which unfolds by little and little. . . . .

— You may conceive, Reader, how far I might push this conversation upon a subject, about which so much

much has been spoken, so much has been written for two thousand years, without getting one step forward. If you do not take very kindly what I tell you, at least receive in good part that there are some things which I spare you the trouble of hearing.

While our two theologians were disputing without understanding each other, as in theology it will sometimes happen, night approached. They were traversing a country in which travelling at all times was unsafe, and which was still more so at a period when a bad administration, combined with wretchedness, had multiplied without end the number of malefactors. They halted at one of the most miserable inns in the world. Two wretched beds were prepared for them in a room formed

formed by a partition of boards that displayed on every side wide-gaping crevices. They called for supper. They were served with dirty water, black bread and sour wine. The host, the hostess, children and servants, every thing had a forbidding aspect. Close by their side they heard immoderate bursts of laughter, and the tumultuous joy of about a dozen robbers, who had been before them and engrossed all the provisions. James was tolerably tranquil: his Master was far from being in the same temper. The latter was employed in placing his chagrin before him in every attitude, and in every point of view; while his servant devoured a few slices of black bread, and swallowed, not without wry faces, some glasses of bad wine. They were in this situation, when they heard a knocking at their door.

door. It was a waiter, whom these insolent and dangerous neighbours had compelled to carry to our travellers, on one of their plates, all the bones of a fowl which they had eaten up. James, fired with indignation at this treatment, laid hold of his Master's pistols. Where are you going ?—Leave me to manage the matter.—Where are you going, I say ?—Why ! to bring this rabble to reason.—Don't you know there is a dozen of them ?—Were they an hundred, the number is of no consequence, if it is decreed on high that they are not enough.—Devil confound you with your impertinent babble. . . . . James makes his escape from his Master, enters the room where the ruffians were assembled with a loaded pistol in each hand. Quick to bed, said he, the first that stirs I shall blow his brains out. . . . . James's

James's air and tone of voice so strongly proved him to be in earnest, that the rogues, who valued their lives as much as honest men, rose from table without the smallest murmur, undressed themselves and went to bed. His Master, doubtful of the issue of this adventure, waited his return in fear and trembling. James entered the room loaded with the spoils of these people. He had seized the whole of their effects, that they might not be tempted to rise again. He had extinguished their candles and doubled-locked their door, the key of which he kept in his hand with one of his pistols. At present, Sir, said he to his Master, we have nothing more to do than barricade this door by pushing our beds close to it, and then go to sleep in tranquillity. Accordingly, he set to work and pushed the beds up against the

the door, recounting to his Master with great coolness and brevity the detail of this expedition.

MASTER.

What a devil of a fellow you are, James! You believe then. . . .

JAMES.

I neither believe nor disbelieve.

MASTER.

Had they refused to go to bed?

JAMES.

That was impossible.

MASTER.

Why!

JAMES.

Because they did not refuse.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Should they rise again?

JAMES.

Why then, so much the better, or so much the worse.

MASTER.

If.... if.... if.... and....

JAMES.

If, if, the sea were to boil, as the saying is, we should have abundance of fish ready cooked. What the devil, sir, but this minute you thought that I ran a very great risk, yet nothing was more unfounded. Now you imagine yourself in imminent danger, yet, perhaps, nothing is more false. All the

people in this house dread one another, which proves that we are a parcel of fools .... Conversing thus he undresses, tumbles into bed and falls asleep. His Master, eating in his turn, a slice of black bread and drinking a glass of bad wine, pricked up his ears, looked at James, who lay snoring, and said : What a devil of a fellow is this ? .... Following the example of his Valet, the Master stretched himself also upon his bed, but he could not like him enjoy repose ; for he did not sleep a wink. At day-break James felt somebody shaking him, it was his Master who whispered him : James ! James !

JAMES,

What is the matter ?

MASTER.

MASTER.

It is day?

JAMES.

Very possibly.

MASTER.

Rise then.

JAMES.

Why?

MASTER.

That we may leave this place in all haste.

JAMES.

Why?

MASTER.

Because we are not well here.

JAMES.

Who knows that we are not, or that we shall be better any where else?

MASTER.

James!

JAMES.

Hey-day! James! James! What a devil of a fellow you are?

MASTER.

What a devil of a fellow rather are you: James, my friend.

James

James rubbed his eyes, yawned several times, stretched himself, rose, put on his clothes very deliberately, replaced the beds in their former station, sallied out of the room, went down stairs, into the stable, saddled and bridled the horses, awoke the landlord who was still asleep, discharged the reckoning, kept the keys of the two chambers, and off set our heroes.

The Master wished to proceed at a brisk trot; James wished to pace along, and always agreeably to his system. When they had got a considerable distance from their late uncomfortable lodging, the Master hearing something rattle in James's pockets, asked him what it was. James replied, that it was the two keys of the chambers.

MASTER.

And why did you not give them back?

JAMES.

Because it will be necessary to force the two doors, that of our fellow-lodgers in order to liberate them from their prison, that of our room in order to restore them their clothes, and because all this will give us time.

MASTER.

Very well, James! But why gain time?

JAMES.

Why? Upon my faith I don't know.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Besides, if you wish to gain time, why travel at that slow pace?

JAMES.

It is for want of knowing what is decreed on high, that we neither know what we mean, nor what we do, and that we follow our caprice which we call reason, or our reason which often is nothing but a dangerous whimsy, that sometimes turns out well, sometimes ill.

MASTER.

Can you tell me what constitutes a fool, and what a wise man?

JAMES.

Why not ? . . . A fool . . . Stop . . . is an unhappy man, and by consequence a happy man is wise.

MASTER.

And what do you mean by a happy man and an unhappy man ?

JAMES.

That point is easy. A happy man is he whose happiness is decreed on high, and by consequence, he whose misery is decreed on high is an unhappy man.

MASTER.

And who is he who has decreed on high happiness and misery ?

JAMES.

JAMES.

And who is he that formed the grand register on which every decree is inscribed? A Captain, the friend of my Captain, would have cheerfully given more money than I'll say to know. As for him, he would not have given a doit; no more would I; for what should I gain by that? Could I thus escape falling into the pit where I am to break my neck?

MASTER.

I believe you could.

JAMES.

I however believe not: for in that case there must needs be a false line in that great register which contains truth, which

which contains only truth, and which contains the whole truth. It would be inscribed in the great register, James shall break his neck such a day; and yet James should not break his neck. Can you conceive it possible that this could be the case whoever be the author of this great register?

MASTER.

Much might be said upon that point.

JAMES.

My captain was of opinion that prudence is a supposition on which we are authorised by experience to consider the circumstances in which we are placed as causes of certain effects which in relation to the future are fitted to inspire hope or fear.

MASTER.

MASTER.

And you understood something of these principles?

JAMES.

Assuredly I did. By degrees I became acquainted with his language. But he would say, Who can boast the possession of a sufficient share of experience? Has he who flattered himself with having made the best provision, never proved a dupe? Besides, is there any man capable of justly appreciating the circumstances in which he is placed? The calculation which passes in our minds, and that which is inscribed in the register on high, are two calculations widely different. Is it we who guide destiny, or destiny that regulates us? How many plans, wisely concerted, have failed? how many shall yet prove abortive?

abortive? How many mad designs have succeeded; how many shall yet be crowned with success! This my Captain told me after the taking of Bergen-op-Zoom and Port Mahon; and he would add, that, though prudence did not secure the fortunate issue of a design, it consoled and excused us for its failure. He would sleep, too, the night before an engagement, as quietly in his tent as in garrison, and marched to battle as he would have gone to a ball. Of him, indeed, you might fairly have exclaimed, What a devil of a fellow!

At this moment they heard behind them, at a little distance, shouts and cries. They looked back, and saw a number of men armed with poles and pitch-forks, advancing in all haste. You will imagine that these were the people

people of the inn, their servants, and the robbers we mentioned. You will imagine that, in the morning, they had broken open their doors for want of the keys, and that the robbers had supposed our two travellers had decamped with their spoils. These were the thoughts by which James was possessed, and he muttered between his teeth, Cursed be the keys, and that whim or reason which tempted me to carry them away: cursed be the prudence by which it was dictated, &c. &c. You will suppose now, that this little army is to fall upon James and his Master, that a bloody battle is to ensue, that the cudgels are to be exercised, and pistols fired; and it rests with me whether all this shall not actually take place: but then farewell the truth of history, farewell to the narrative of James's amours. Our travellers

travellers were not pursued. I know not what happened at the inn after their departure. They continued their route, advancing always without knowing whither they went, although they had some notion where they meant to go, beguiling fatigue and *emui* with alternate silence and talk, as those who travel use to do; and sometimes, too, those who sit at home.

It is very evident that I am not writing a romance, since I neglect what a romance writer would not fail to employ. He who should take what I write for truth, perhaps would be nearer the mark than he who should consider it to be fabulous.

The Master was the first who broke silence this time, and began upon the old

old string :—Well, James, now for the story of your amours.

JAMES.

I don't know whereabouts I was. I have been so often interrupted, that I should do quite as well to begin afresh.

MASTER.

No, no. Recovered from your swoon, at the door of the cottage, you found yourself in bed, surrounded by its inhabitants.

JAMES.

Very well. The most urgent circumstance of the case was to get a surgeon, and there was none to be had for a whole league round. The landlord mounted one of his children on horseback, and sent him to the nearest place.

place. Meanwhile his wife had warmed some coarse wine, torn an old shirt of her husband, and my knee was bathed, bound up with bandages, and wrapped in linen. Some lumps of sugar, rescued from the mice, were put into a quantity of the wine that had been employed in bathing me, which I swallowed. Then they exhorted me to have patience. It was late. The people of the house sat down to table, and supped. Supper was soon over; yet neither child nor surgeon was come. The father grew ill-humoured. He was naturally a peevish fellow; he looked sulky to his wife. Nothing was to his mind. He dismissed the children harshly to bed. His wife sat down upon a stool, and took her distaff. He went backwards and forwards, and at every turn he sought some pretence to quarrel.

quarrel. If you had been at the mill as I desired .... and he completed the sentence by a significant shrug towards that side where my bed stood.—I shall go to-morrow.—You had better have gone to-day, as I desired you .... And whom do you expect to dress up that chaff which is still left in the barn?—It shall be done to-morrow.—What we have draws near a close, and you would have been much better employed in doing it to-day, as I desired you ... And that bag of barley which is spoiling in the loft, I'll wager you have never once thought of spreading it out.—The children have done it.—You ought to have done it yourself. Had you been in the loft you would not have been standing at the door ... At this moment arrived first one surgeon, then a second, then a

third along with the little boy of the cottage.

MASTER.

So, there you are now as well provided with surgeons as St. Roch was with hats.

JAMES.

The first was from home when the little boy called at his house; but his wife had sent notice to the second; and the third had accompanied the little boy. Ah! good evening, brothers of the profession, are you here? says the first to the two others. They had made the greatest possible haste, they were warm, they were thirsty. They sat down round the table before the table-cloth was removed. The wife goes down to the cellar and returns with

with a bottle. The husband muttered between his teeth : What the devil was she doing at the door ? . . . They drank ; they talked of the diseases prevalent in the district ; they went through the whole course of their practice. I complain ; they tell me, we shall be with you in a moment. After this bottle they desire a second, to be placed to the account of my entertainment ; then a third and a fourth, always to be placed to the account of my entertainment ; and at every bottle the husband repeated his first exclamation : what the devil was she doing at the door ?

What might not some writers have made of this incident ? how might they have wrought up the story of these three surgeons, their conversation over the

fourth bottle, the vast number of their marvellous cures, the impatience of James, the ill humour of the landlord, the dissertations of these village Esculapius' respecting James's knee, their different opinions, one maintaining that James was a dead man, if his limb was not immediately cut off; another that it was necessary to extract the ball with the piece of cloth which it had carried in along with it, and if possible to preserve the poor devil's leg. In the mean time James was sitting upon his bed compassionating his limb and bidding it his last adieus, like one of our generals between Dufouart and Louis. The third surgeon was plying the bottle, while a quarrel was fomenting between the other two, which from invective proceeded to blows.

You

You are welcome to make what you will of every thing you find in romances, in ancient comedy, and in society, I freely resign it to you. When I heard the landlord say of his wife, what business had she at the door, I recollected the Harpagon of Moliere, when he says of his son: *what had he to do in this galley?* and conceiving that it is necessary to unite pleasantry with truth, a circumstance which has given permanence to the question, *what had he to do in this gailey?* * I concluded that the expression of my peasant, what had she to do to at the door? will never pass for a proverb.

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* *Qu'allait-il faire dans cette galère?* A proverbial expression in France which is applied to the situation of a person who has involved himself in difficulty by any particular act.

James did not employ the same scruples with regard to his Master that I have observed with you. He did not omit the slightest circumstance, even at the risk of setting him asleep a second time. If it was not the most able, it was at least the most athletic of the three surgeons who remained master of the patient.

Are you not going, you tell me, to lay before us anatomical knives, incisions, blood streaming, and to present us with the sight of a surgical operation. In your opinion, would not this be in a fine taste? .... Proceed, however; wave the Surgeon's operation; but at least you will allow James to tell his Master, as he did: Ah! Sir, it is a terrible business to set a fractured knee! And his Master to tell him as

before

before . . . Go on, James, you are out of your reckoning . . . . But what I would not conceal from you for the wealth of the Indies, scarcely had James's Master made this impertinent reply, when his horse stumbled and fell down, and his knee struck with great violence upon a sharp flint, and he fell a roaring with all his might, I am killed! I have broke my knee! . . . . . Although James, the best hearted soul in the universe, was tenderly attached to his Master, I would give a great deal to know what passed in his mind, if not the first moment, at least after he was assured that this fall would be attended with no serious consequences, and whether he was able to resist a slight emotion of secret joy at an accident which taught his Master to estimate the nature of a wound on the

knee. Besides, there is another thing, reader, which I wish from my heart, you would tell me, and that is, whether his Master would not have preferred a wound even more grievous upon any other place than the knee, or whether he was not more sensible to shame than to pain.

When the Master had a little recovered from his fall and the anguish it had occasioned, he adjusted himself again on the saddle and clapped spurs to his horse which darted away like lightning. James's beast did the same, for there subsisted between these two animals the same intimacy as between their riders. They were two pair of steady friends.

When

When the two horses, having galloped themselves out of breath, resumed their ordinary pace, James said to his Master: Hey-day, sir, what do you think of it now?

MASTER.

Of what?

JAMES.

Of a hurt on the knee.

MASTER.

I am of your opinion, it is one of the most painful.

JAMES.

On your own?

MASTER.

No, no; on yours, on mine, on any knee in the universe.

JAMES.

JAMES.

Master ! Master ! you do not rightly consider, that we never feel but for ourselves.

MASTER.

What nonsense !

JAMES.

Ah ! could I but speak as I can think ! It was decreed on high, however, that I should never find words to express what passed in my head.

Here James got entangled in a metaphysical speculation, very abstruse, and perhaps very just. He laboured to make his Master comprehend, that the word pain was not connected with any idea ; and that it only began to signify something the moment it recalled

to

to our memory some sensation we had experienced. His master demanded if he had ever been in labour? No, replied James.—And do you believe that the operation of child bearing is attended with very great pain? Assuredly! Do you feel for women in the pains of labour?—Very much. You sometimes feel then for others besides yourself?—I feel for those who wring their hands, who tear their hair, who utter cries, because I know by experience that these expressions are never exhibited without suffering; but as for the pain of a woman in labour, I know not what it is, thank God! But, to return to a pain with which we are both acquainted, the history of my knee, in which your fall has given you an interest. . . . . .

MASTER.

MASTER.

No, James; the history of your amours, in which my past disappointments have given me an equal interest.

JAMES.

Conceive me then dressed, somewhat eased, the surgeon gone, and my host and hostess retired to bed. Their apartment was separated from mine only by a partition of boards, through which you could have a clear view of whatever passed, pasted over with grey paper, on which were drawn some pictures in colours. I chanced to be awake, and heard the wife saying to her husband: Let me alone, do: I am not at present in a mood for merriment. A poor wretch who was upon the point of expiring at our door. . . . My dear,

you

you can tell me all this by and by.—No, it can't be: if you don't forbear I shall get out of bed. And, do you imagine that I can have any relish for such things when my heart is so oppressed:—Oh! oh! if you require so much entreaty the worse for yourself.—It is not that I need to be entreated, but it is because you sometimes are of so harsh . . . . . It is that—It is that . . . .

After a very short pause, the husband resumed the conversation: My dear, said he, admit now, however, that from a misplaced compassion, you have involved us in an embarrassment, from which it is almost impossible to be extricated. It is a bad year, and hardly can we supply the wants of ourselves and our children. Corn is excessively high.

high. No wine to be had! For all this, were employment to be obtained, —but the rich abridge their mode of living; poor folks can get nothing to do. For one day that they are employed they are idle four. No one pays what he owes; creditors proceed to the most rigorous extremities; and at such a time now do you chuse to shelter a person of whom you know nothing; a stranger, who will remain in your house as long as it shall please God and the surgeon, who will be in no hurry to perform a cure; for surgeons always take care to prolong the disease as much as possible; one besides who is not worth a groat, and will double or treble our expence? Look there, my dear, how do you propose to get rid of this man? Speak, my dear, give me some reason. —How is it possible to talk with you on the

the subject?—You say that I am ill-natured; that I grumble; what then; who would not be so too? Who could help grumbling? There still was left a little wine in the cellar; God knows the road it will go! The surgeons drank last night more than we and our children would have consumed in a week! And, pray, who must pay the surgeon, who, you may well believe, will not attend for nothing?—Yes, indeed, and it becomes you well to say all this! Because we are already wretched enough, you wish to get more children, as if we had not plenty already!—Pshaw! no, indeed!—But yes, indeed, I am sure I shall fall with-child!—So you say every time—It has never, however, failed to be the case when my ear itched after, and I now feel the itching as formerly.—Your ear knows no-

thing about the matter.—Don't touch me; let go my ear! Forbear, man! what, are you mad! You will be the worse for this.—No, no, the last time was on St. John's eve.—You will never rest till . . . . and then a month hence you will look sulky as if it were my fault.—No, no.—And in nine months it will be the devil and all—No, no—It was your own desire!—Yes, yes—You will remember? And you wont say, as you have always said before!—Yes, yes . . . . And then, after going backwards and forwards, from no to yes, and yes to no, this man enraged at his wife for having yielded to a sentiment of humanity . . . . .

MASTER.

That is the very reflection I was making.

JAMES.

JAMES.

Certain it is, that this husband was not much given to consider consequences; but his wife was handsome, and he was young. You never see so many children gotten at other times as during a period of misery.

MASTER.

Population never goes on so fast as among beggars.

JAMES.

A child more is nothing to them; they are supported by charity. Besides, it is the only pleasure that costs nothing. At night they console themselves without expence for the calamities of the day. The reflections of this man, however, were, nevertheless, just. While I indulged these remarks

I was attacked by a violent pain in my knee, and cried out: Oh! my knee! The husband exclaimed, Ah! my dear. And the wife echoed the exclamation, ah! my dear! But.... but the man there in the next room!—Heyday! what of the man?—He may have overheard us.—Overheard what?—I dare not look him in the face to-morrow—And for what? Are you not my wife? Am I not your husband? Is a wife to have a husband, and a husband a wife, for nothing?—Oh! oh!—Well, what's the matter now?—My ear! my ear!—Good-lack, your ear?—It is worse than ever?—Lie still and sleep; it will go off.—I can't. Ah! my ear, my ear!—My ear, my ear, that is easily said.... I will not tell you what passed between them; but the wife, after repeating, My ear! my ear! several times,

in

in a low and hurried tone of voice, at length ended with sighing, in broken accents, my ea . . . . r ; and when this, my ea . . . r was finished, something or other, joined to the silence which succeeded, led me to imagine that the pain in her ear was by some means allayed ; no matter how, I was pleased that it was so.

MASTER.

And so was she.—James, now lay your hand upon your heart, and swear that this is not the very woman with whom you fell in love.

JAMES.

I swear she was not.

MASTER.

So much the worse for you.

JAMES.

It is so much the better, or so much the worse, as it might have happened. You seem to think, that women with such an ear as her's are not very backward to listen ?

MASTER.

I belive that so it is decreed on high.

JAMES.

I believe that it is written in the same decree, that they can't listen very long to the same person, and that they are always a little given to lend their ear to another.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Very possible.

They had now got involved in an endless dispute concerning women; one affirming that they were good, the other, that they were bad; and both were right; the one, that they were fools, the other, that they were wifs; and they both were right. The one, that they were perfidious, the other, that they were faithful; and they were both right. The one that they were avaricious, the other, that they were liberal; and they both were right. The one, that they were beautiful, the other, that they were ugly; and they both were right. The one, that they were giddy, the other, that they were discreet;

creet; the one, that they were candid, the other, that they were deceitful; the one, that they were ignorant, the other, that they were enlightened; the one, that they were modest, the other, that they were licentious; the one, that they were foolish, the other, that they were wise; the one, that they were little, the other, that they were tall; and still they were both right.

While they were pursuing this dispute, upon which they might have made the tour of the globe, without being silent a single minute, and without ever coming to an agreement, they were overtaken by a storm, which compelled them to push on . . . . Whither? —Whither? In truth, reader, you are exceedingly troublesome with this curiosity of yours! And what in the devil's

devil's name does it concern you? Though I were to tell you it was to Saint Germain, or Pontoise, our lady of Loretto, or Saint James of Compostella, would you be a whit the wiser? If you insist upon it, I will tell you, that they pushed on towards . . . yes; why not? . . . towards a large castle over the gate, of which was inscribed, "I belong to nobody and I belong to every body. You were in it before you entered, and you will still be in it when you go away." Did they enter then into this castle?—No, for either the inscription was false, or they were in it before they entered.—But, at least, they came out of it?—No; for either the inscription was false, or they were still in it when they went away.—Then pray what did they there? James said, what was decreed on high; and his master, what he had a mind; and they

both were right.—What company did they find in it?—Promiscuous.—The conversation that passed?—Some truth and a great deal of falsehood.—Were there any men of wit there?—Where is the place you will not meet with some? And, besides, there were impertinent inquisitive fellows, to be shunned more than the pestilence.—What provoked James and his Master all the time they walked about? . . .—They walked about then?—What else can people do when they neither sit nor lie in bed? James and his Master were provoked to find a score of impudent fellows, who engrossed the most superb apartments where they always remained close shut up, pretending, contrary to common right, and the true meaning of the inscription, that the castle had been bequeathed to them in full property, and

who,

who, by the assistance of a number of idle rascals in their pay, had brought over to their side a number of other idle rogues in their pay, perfectly ready to hang or run through the body the first man who ventured to contradict them. Nevertheless, about the time that James and his Master were there, some occasionally had the courage to oppose their pretensions.—With impunity?—That was as it happened.

I see you are going to object, that I trifle, and that, not knowing how to dispose of my travellers, I have recourse to allegory, the ordinary resource of minds destitute of invention. I will sacrifice my allegory and all the advantages I could derive from it; I will subscribe to any thing you please upon condition, however, that you do not teaze

teaze me about the last place where James and his Master took up their lodging; whether they landed in a large city, and went to spend the night with girls; whether they passed the night at the house of an old friend, by whom they were superbly entertained, or took shelter among mendicant friars where they had bad lodging and worse cheer for the love of God; that they were received into a nobleman's house, where they wanted every thing necessary in the midst of all that was superfluous; or sallied in the morning out of a splendid inn, where they were charged extravagantly for a wretched supper served in plate, and a night's lodging in damask curtains, in damp sheets and an ill-made bed; or that they shared the hospitality of a village parson with a competent living,

ing, who made no scruple to lay the barn-yards of his parishioners under contribution, for an omelet, or a fricaseed chicken; or that they got drunk with delicious wines, enjoyed excellent cheer, and took a complete surfeit in a rich abbey of Bernardines. For though all this to you may appear equally possible, James was not of the same opinion. He considered nothing to be really possible but what was decreed on high. It is undoubtedly true, however, from whatever place you choose to make them set out, scarcely had they advanced twenty paces, when the Master said to James, after having at the same time, as usual, taken a pinch of snuff, Well, James, now for the history of your amours.

Instead

Instead of returning an answer, James exclaimed: Devil take the history of my amours! Don't you see that I have left.....

MASTER.

What have you left?

Without making any answer James turned all his pockets inside out, and rummaged them all to no purpose. He had left his travelling-purse under the bolster of his bed; and no sooner had he confessed the fact than his Master wished the history of his amours at the devil, crying: don't you see that I have left my watch hanging above the chimney!

James did not wait for intreaties, but instantly turned the rein, and at a gentle pace, for he never was in a hurry, regained

gained . . . . . : the large castle ? No, no. Among all the different possible lodgings which I have already enumerated, choose that with which the present incident best corresponds.

Meanwhile his Master continued to move on. Now, however, the Master and the Man being separated, I know not to which of the two I shall give the preference. If you wish to follow James, consider well the matter ; the search for the purse and the watch may be so long and so complicated that for a considerable time he will not rejoin his Master, the only confident of his story, and then the amours of James farewell ! If you leave him alone to search for the purse and the watch, and prefer the company of his Master, you may improve your manners, but at the expence

expence of *ennui*. You are not yet sufficiently acquainted with this species of character. Their heads are not over and above furnished with ideas. If they say any thing sensible, it proceeds from memory or from inspiration. They have eyes like you and me, but ten to one if they see the greatest part of the time they are open. They neither sleep nor wake. They are contented to vegetate, and this is their habitual function. The automaton proceeded in his usual way, looking back from time to time to see whether James was returning. He dismounted from his horse and walked, he again mounted, rode a quarter of a league, again dismounted and set himself down on the ground; his horses' bridle hung over his arm, aed his head resting upon his two hands. When he was tired of this

this posture he rose and looked far and near to see whether he could descry James. No James was to be seen. Now he lost all temper, and without knowing whether he was speaking or no, he exclaimed: Ah the rogue! ah the hound! the knave where can he be? what can he be doing? must so much time be spent in recovering a purse and a watch? I'll bang him soundly, that I will! I'll tan his hide for him! Then he fumbled for his watch in his fob where it was not to be found; and this was the consummation of his afflictions; for without his watch, his snuff-box and James, he did not know what to make of himself. These were the three grand resources of his life, which passed away in taking snuff, looking at the time of day, and putting questions to James; and these in all

their possible combinations. Deprived of his watch, he was then reduced to his snuff-box which he opened and shut every minute, as I do myself when I am possessed with *ennui*. The quantity of snuff which is left in my snuff-box at night is in the direct ratio of the amusement, or in the inverse ratio of the *ennui* I have experienced during the day. I beseech you, reader, to accustom yourself to this mode of speaking, which is borrowed from geometry, because I find that it has the advantage of precision, and it is a phraseology which I intend frequently to employ.

Well now! have you had enough of the Master; and his Valet not coming to us what do you think of our going to him! Alas! poor James! At the moment we are speaking of him, he

he exclaims in a piteous tone: it was then decreed on high that all in one day I should be apprehended on the high-way for a robber, on the point of being carried to prison, and accused of seducing a girl!

As he slowly drew near to the castle, not the place where they had lodged the last night, there passed by, one of those itinerant merchants called pedlars, who accosted him: Good, your honour, any garters, belts, watch-chains, snuff-boxes in the highest taste, real tortoise-shell, rings or watch-seals; here, sir, I have got a watch; a watch, sir; a capital gold watch, double-cased, elegantly chaced, as good as new . . . . . I want one, replied James, but it is not that of yours, I promise you, and continued his route still at a gentle pace. As he went

along he imagined that he saw the decree on high where it was written: that the watch which this man had offered him was his Master's. He returned and said to the pedlar: friend, shew me that watch you mentioned with the gold case, I have a notion it may answer me. Faith, said the pedlar, I should not wonder if it did; it is capital, very capital, made by Julien-le-Roi: I have but this moment got it; I had it dog-cheap, and you shall have a bargain. I like little profits soon turned; but the worst of it with us is the length of time goods lie on our hands; these three months to come I shall not have such a wind-fall. You appear to me to look like a gentleman, and I would sooner let you have a good bargain than another..... Chatting away in this manner, the pedlar had laid down

down his pack, opened it and produced the watch, which James instantly recognised without the smallest emotion of surprise; for he never was in a hurry about any thing, and rarely astonished. He surveyed the watch attentively: yes, said he aside to himself, 'tis the same . . . and aloud to the pedlar: you are right, it is elegant, very elegant, and I know besides that it is good . . . then clapping it in his fob, he said to the pedlar: God be praised, my friend.—How! God be praised?—Yes, it is my Master's watch.—I know nothing at all of your Master; the watch is mine, I have fairly bought and fairly paid for it . . . and laying hold of James by the collar he attempted to recover the watch. James gets near his horse, lays hold of one of his pistols, applies it to the breast of the pedlar:

stand off, said he, or you are a dead man. The pedlar quits his hold in a fright. James mounts his horse and proceeds at an easy pace towards the town, saying to himself: here we have recovered the watch, now let us see after the purse . . . The pedlar shuts up his pack in great haste, throws it over his shoulders and pursues James, bawling, stop thief! stop thief! murder! help! help! . . . It was in harvest time and the fields were covered with labourers; all left their sickles, crowding round the man, demanding, where is the robber? where is the murderer?—There, down there!—What! he who moves on so slowly towards the city-gate?—The same.—Pho! you are mad, that is not the pace of a robber.—He is one, he is one; I tell you he has robbed me of a gold watch - - - The people

ple knew not what to think of it, the cries of the pedlar or the tranquil pace of James. I am undone, however, my lads, added the pedlar, if you refuse me your assistance; the watch is worth thirty Louis if it is worth a farthing. Lend me your assistance, he is carrying off my watch, and should he clap spurs to his horse, I am sure I shall never see more of it . . . If James was not within reach of these cries, he had no difficulty however in seeing the crowd, yet he never once thought of mending his pace. The pedlar determined the peasants, by the hopes of reward, to pursue James. Conceive then a multitude of men, women and children, running with shouts of thief! thief! murder! murder! and the pedlar following as hard as the burden on his back would permit, crying, stop thief! stop thief!

murder! . . . They entered the city; for I recollect this minute that it was a city where James and his Master had lodged the night before.—The inhabitants quit their houses, and, joining the peasants and the pedlar, all in concert set up a shout of thief! thief! murder! murder! and all at once overtake James. The pedlar darting upon him, James fetched him a blow that laid him sprawling, though he roared as vigourously as ever, knave! rascal! villain! restore my watch; you shall be compelled to make restitution, and be hanged into the bargain . . . . James, preserving the utmost composure, addressed the mob which increased every instant. There is a magistrate of police in the place, says he, carry me before him; there I will demonstrate that I am no rogue, and that very probably

probably this fellow is one. I have, it is true, taken a watch from him, but that watch is my Master's. I am not unknown in this city. My Master and I arrived here t'other evening, and staid in the house of the lieutenant-general; his old friend.—If I omitted to tell you sooner, that James and his Master had passed through Conches, and lodged in the house of the lieutenant-general of the place, it is because it never occurred to me before.—Take me to the lieutenant-general's house, said James, as he dismounted.—Away they marched in the middle of the crowd, all three, himself, his horse and the pedlar. They arrive at the gate of the lieutenant-general. James, his horse, and the pedlar are introduced, James and the pedlar grasping each others collars. The mob remained without.

All this time how was James's Master employed? He had fallen asleep by the side of the high-way, the horse's bridle hung on his arm, while the animal cropped the grass around as fat as the length of the bridle would permit.

As soon as the lieutenant-general perceived James, he cried, Hah! Is it you, James, my poor fellow! What brings you back here alone?—My Master's watch; he had left it hanging on above the chimney, and I found it in this man's pack; our purse, I forgot, under my bolster; and it will be recovered if you give the command.—Be it so decreed on high, added the magistrate . . . He instantly summoned his servants; and the pedlar, immediately pointing to a tall ill-looking fellow

fellow newly admitted into the family, There is the man, says he, who sold me the watch.

The magistrate, assuming a stern aspect, said to the servant and the pedlar, you both deserve to be sent to the galleys; you for selling the watch, and you for having bought it . . . to his servant, Restore this man his money, and instantly strip off your livery . . . to the pedlar, Make haste and quit the country, if you have not a mind to be imprisoned for life. You are both embarked in a profession that leads to the gallows . . . . Now, James, I must look after your purse . . . She who had appropriated the money, required no summons to appear. She was a tall handsome baggage.—It is I who have the purse, said she to her master; but

it was not stolen; he himself compli-mented me with it.—I give you my purse!—Yes.—Possibly enough: but deuce take me if I recollect a word of the matter .... Says the magistrate to James, we had better sift this matter no farther.—Sir ... I can easily see that she is handsome and obliging.—Sir, I protest ... How much did the purse con-tain?—About nine hundred and seven-teen livres.--Ah! Javotte! nine hundred and seventeen livres, for a single night! That is a great deal too much both for you and for him. Give me the purse ... The girl gave her master the purse, who, taking out a crown: Hold there, said he, throwing her a crown-piece, there is the price of your services. You are worth more, I confess, but from some one else than James. I wish you twice as much every day, but not in my house; do you hear that?

For

For you, James, make haste, mount your horse, and return to your Master.

James bowed to the magistrate and retired, without making an answer; but he said to himself: The impudent slut! the gipsy! It was then decreed on high that another should lie with her, and that James should pay for his entertainment! Courage, however, James; are you not abundantly fortunate, in recovering your purse and your Master's watch, at so little expence?

James mounted his horse, and made his way through the crowd, which had collected at the door of the magistrate's house. But as he could not brook the idea that so many people should take him for a thief, he affected to pull the watch

watch out of his pocket, and look what o'clock it was, then he clapped spurs to his horse, which was not used to this discipline, and which set out with greater speed. James was accustomed to let him follow his own inclination upon this point, for he found as much inconvenience in attempting to check him when he gallopped, as to urge him on when he went slow. We imagine that we guide destiny, while, in truth, it always leads us; and, to James, every thing which touched or approached him, his horse, his master, a monk, a dog, a woman, a mule, a crow, every thing was destiny. His horse then carried him full speed towards his Master, who had fallen asleep upon the side of the high-way, the bridle of his horse hanging over his arm, as I have already mentioned. At that time, however,

the horse was attached to the bridle, but when James arrived the bridle was still in its place, but the horse had disappeared. A thief, it seemed, had come while he was asleep, silently cut the bridle asunder and carried off the animal. By the noise of James's horse his Master awoke, and his first salutation was, You are come back, you booby, you are come back? You are there, are you?... With that he fell a yawning open mouthed.—Yawn away, yawn away, sir, quite at your ease, said James; but where is your horse?—My horse?—Yes, your horse.... The Master immediately perceiving that he had been robbed of his horse, was preparing to fall upon James, and bang him with the reins of the bridle, when James cries, Softly, sir, softly; I am not now disposed to allow myself to be beaten;

beaten ; I shall take the first blow, but I swear that, on the second, I set off full speed, and leave you on the spot. . . This menace of James instantly disarmed the fury of his Master, who said to him in a softened tone ; And what of my watch ?—There it is.—And your purse ?—There it is also.—You have staid a long while.—Not too long, considering all I have done. Pray listen attentively. I went away ; I have fought ; I have raised all the peasants of the country, and collected all the inhabitants of the town ; I have been taken for a robber on the high-way ; I have been carried before the justice, and have undergone two examinations ; I have brought two men within an ace of being hanged ; I have caused a valet to be turned out of doors, and a woman servant to be dismissed :

I have

I have been convicted of lying with a creature, whom I had never seen, and whom yet I was forced to pay; and here I am again returned.—And I, waiting your return . . It was decreed on high, that while you waited my return, you should fall asleep and be robbed of your horse. Cheer up, sir, think no more about it. It is only a horse lost, and perhaps it is decreed on high that he is to be recovered.—Alas, my horse! my poor horse!—Though you were to continue your lamentations till to-morrow you would not be a jot nearer the purpose.—What are we to do?—I will take you behind me; or, if you like it better, we shall throw off our boots, fix them to my horse's saddle, and pursue our journey on foot.—Alas, my horse! my poor horse!

They

They resolved to set out on foot, the Master crying now and then, My horse! My poor horse! And James commenting on the summary he had given of his adventures. When he mentioned the girl's accusation, his Master said to him;—So, James, you did not lie with the girl?

JAMES.

No, sir.

MASTER.

And yet you paid her?

JAMES.

Certainly!

MASTER.

I was once in my life more unfortunate than you.

JAMES.

JAMES.

You paid a girl, I suppose, after lying with her?

MASTER.

You have guessed it.

JAMES.

What, though you should give me the history of this affair?

MASTER.

Before I enter upon the history of my love stories, you had better finish the narrative of yours, which, I suppose, are the first and only amours of your life, notwithstanding the adventure with the maid servant of the lieutenant-general of Conches; for though you had lain with the girl, still you might not have been in love with her.

We every day lie with women whom we do not love, and do not lie with the women whom we do love. But . . .

JAMES.

Well ! but ? What follows ?

MASTER.

My horse ! . . . Do not distress yourself my friend James ; put yourself in the place of my horse : suppose that I had lost you, and tell me if you should not esteem me more did you hear me crying my James ! my poor James !

James smiled and said : I believe I had got the length of the conversation of my landlord with his wife in the night, subsequent to my first dressing. I rested a little. My landlord and his wife were later of rising than usual.

MASTER.

MASTER.

I can conceive that.

JAMES.

When I awoke I gently drew aside the curtain and I saw my landlord, his wife and the surgeon, holding a private conference near the door. After what I heard during the night it was not difficult to divine what was the subject of this conversation. I coughed. The surgeon said to the husband: he is awake; friend, go down to the cellar, we shall take a glass, it will make my hand steady; I shall then take off the dressing, and we will consider what is to be done.

The bottle was brought and emptied; for, in the technical language, to take a

glass means to drink at least a bottle: the surgeon approached my bed and said to me: what sort of a night have you had?—not bad;—your arm .... Very good, your pulse is by no means bad; there is scarcely any fever. I must see your knee ... Come, good woman, says he to my landlady, who was behind the curtain at the foot of my bed, assist us ... The hostess called one of her children ... It is not a child we want, it is you; a wrong movement would give us trouble for a month. Come near ... The hostess approached with down-cast eyes ... Take this limb, the sound one I mean, I will take charge of the other. Gently, gently; nearer me, still a little nearer ... Friend, turn your body a little to the right, to the right, I say, and then we'll have it ... I grasped the quilt of the bed with both hands;

hands; I grinded my teeth; the perspiration flowed down my face.—Friend, this is not very pleasant!—That I know to my cost.—You'll do now. Good woman leave the limb, bring hither the chair and put the pillow upon it . . . it is too near . . . a little farther away . . . Friend, give me your hand, hold fast by me . . . Good woman come to the bedside and support the other arm . . . to a miracle . . . Landlord is there any thing in the bottle?—No.—Go take your wife's situation and let her fetch another . . . Well, let us have a bumper . . . Woman, leave your husband where he is and come beside me . . . The hostess once more called one of her children.—'Sdeath! I told you already that it is not a child but that it is you we want. Down on your knees, pass your hand under the calf

...You tremble, good woman, as if you had seen a ghost; come, take courage .... your left hand under the thigh, here upon the bandage ... Very well! ..... The sewing is opened, the bandages untied, the dressing taken away, and my wound uncovered. The surgeon fumbles about it above and below, and by the sides; and every time he touches me, he says: blockhead! idiot! booby! and this fellow pretends to be a surgeon! This limb a subject for amputation? It will last as long as the other, I'll answer for it.—Shall I be cured?—I have cured others before now.—Shall I be able to walk?—Yes, you shall walk.—Without crippling?—That is another thing. Zounds, my friend, in what a hurry you are; is it not enough that I have saved your limb? Though you do cripple, that is a small

a small consideration. Are you fond of dancing ?—Very fond, indeed.—Then if you do not walk so well you will dance better . . . Some warm wine, hostess . . . . No, give me the cold first: another small glass, your dressing will not be the worse for it . . . he drinks: the warm wine is brought; they bathe the wound, they dress it, they put me into bed, they recommend me to go to sleep if I can, they draw the curtains; they finish the bottle of wine which they began, another is brought, and the conversation is resumed between the surgeon, the landlord, and the landlady:—

LANDLORD.

Will this be a tedious business, sir ?

SURGEON.

Very tedious, indeed . . . I have the pleasure of drinking to your good health, my hearty fellow.

LANDLORD.

But how long may it be? A month?

SURGEON.

A month! Perhaps two, three, or four, for any thing that I know. The knee-pan is cut, the femur, the tibia. . . Your health, hostess.

LANDLORD.

Four months! Mercy on me! Why was he received under my roof! What the devil had she to do at the door?

SURGEON.

SURGEON.

A bumper to my own health, with your leave, for I have wrought hard.

HOSTESS.

My dear, so you are beginning again. This is not what you promised me last night; but patience, you will be in my power again.

LANDLORD.

But tell me what to do with this man? Yet if the year were not so bad! . . .

HOSTESS.

If you please I will go to the parsonage.

LANDLORD.

If you go one foot to the parsonage, I will beat you till you are not able to stir.

SURGEON.

Why so, neighbour? My wife often goes there.

LANDLORD.

That is your affair.

SURGEON.

My god-daughters' health; how does she do?

HOSTESS.

Very well.

SURGEON.

Come, friend, a glass to our wives; they are two good wives.

LANDLORD.

LANDLORD.

Yours is more considerate than mine: she would not have been guilty of such a piece of folly ....

HOSTESS.

But, my good friend, there is the grey sisterhood.

SURGEON.

Ah, mistress! a man, a man to be admitted among nuns! Besides, there is a difficulty in effecting this somewhat more formidable than you imagine ... Let us drink to the nuns; they are good girls.

HOSTESS.

And what difficulty is this?

SURGEON.

SURGEON.

Your husband does not wish you to visit the parson; and my wife does not wish me to go to the nunnery . . . But another glass, landlord, will perhaps suggest some scheme or other. Have you questioned this man? He is not, perhaps without resources.

HOST.

A soldier with resources!

SURGEON.

A soldier has a father, mother, sisters, brothers, relations, friends, some one under heaven . . . But let us take another glass; retire, and leave the management of this business to me.

Such

Such was literally the conversation which passed between the surgeon, the landlord, and the hostess; but what a different colouring might I not have given it by introducing a knave among these honest people? James might have found himself, and you might have seen him, torn from his bed, and thrown upon the highway, or into a quagmire.—Why not killed?—Killed, no: I might have called some person to his assistance who might have been a soldier belonging to his company; but this would have turned the critics' stomachs. The truth, the truth!—The truth you tell me is often frigid, common, and insipd. For instance, your last recital of the dressing of James's knee is true; but, what interest did it impart? None.—Granted.—In adhering to truth, we ought to imitate Mo-

Moliere, Regnard, Richardson, and Sedaine. Truth has prominent points which never fail to be seized upon by genius whenever it exists.—Aye, when there is genius, but when there is none?—There is no necessity for persons writing who are not possessed of genius.—And if, unfortunately, they are like a certain poet whom I sent to Pondicherry.—What poet was this?—This poet . . . But, reader, if you interrupt me, and if I suffer myself to be interrupted at every word, what will become of James's amours? Believe me, we had better leave the poet . . . The landlord and the hostess made their retreat . . . The surgeon approached James's bed side—No, no, the history of the poet of Pondicherry.—One day a young poet came to me, as some come to me every day . . . But what has this to do, reader, with the adventures of

James

James the Fatalist, and of his Master ? ... The history of the poet of Pondicherry.—After the usual compliments upon my wit, my genius, my taste, my condescension, and other discourse, of which I do not believe a word, though I have been in the habit of hearing it repeated, and perhaps with sincerity, for twenty years, the young poet drew a paper from his pocket. There are a few verses, he says, to me.—Verses ! —Yes, sir, and I hope that you will have the goodness to give me your opinion of them.—Do you like to be told the truth ?—Yes, sir, and I desire to hear it from you.—Well, you shall hear it.—What ! are you such a fool as to believe that a poet would come to you in quest of truth ?—Yes.—And really to tell it him ?—Most assuredly ! without management ?—certainly ; ma-

nagement

nagement in such cases is, at the best, a gross insult; when fairly interpreted, it means you are a bad poet; and as I do not think you have nerves to hear the truth, you are but a silly fellow.—And do you find that frankness always succeeds?—It very seldom fails . . . I read the verses of my young poet, and I told him, Your verses not only are bad, but they prove to me, that you will never make good ones.—I must make bad ones then, for I cannot refrain from writing.—What a dreadful curse! Do you know the disgrace, sir, into which you are about to fall? Mediocrity in poets can neither be endured by gods nor men, nor by booksellers' shelves; so said Horace.—I know it.—Are you rich?—No.—Are you poor?—Very poor.—And to poverty you are going to add the ridicule, which at-

attaches to a bad poet; you shall have thrown away your whole life; you will become old. Old, poor, and a bad poet! Ah! sir, what a catalogue!—I am sensible of it; but I am constrained, in spite of myself . . . (Here James would have said: but this was decreed on high).—Have you any relations?—I have.—What is their situation in life?—They are jewellers.—Are they disposed to do any thing for you?—They may.—Well; go see your relations, and propose to them to advance you a small quantity of jewels. Embark for Pondichery, make bad verses on your voyage; on your arrival, make a fortune. Your fortune made, return here, and write as many bad verses as you please, provided that you don't print them, for it is needless to ruin any body . . . About a dozen years after I gave

the young man this advice, he again made his appearance; I did not recollect him. I am, sir, says he, the person whom you sent to Pondichery. I have been there, and have amassed a fortune of an hundred thousand francs. I am returned, have set about writing verses, and here are some, which I have brought you . . . . Are they still bad ?— Still—But your lot is settled, and I have no objection to your persisting to write bad verses.—In truth ; this is my intention . . .

The Surgeon having approached James's bed, the latter did not give him time to speak. I have heard every thing, he says to him . . . Then addressing his Master, he proceeded . . . or rather was going to proceed, when his Master stopped him. He was tired with walking

ing; he sat down by the road-side, with his head turned towards a traveller who was coming up to them on foot, with the bridle of his horse, which followed after, hung over his arm.

You will probable suppose, reader, that this was the horse which was stolen from James's Master; but you are wrong. In a romance, that might happen a little sooner or a little later, in this, or in any other way; but I believe I have told you already, and I again repeat it, this is not a romance.

The Master says to James, Do you see this man who is coming up to us?

JAMES.

I do.

MASTER.

He seems to have a good horse.

JAMES.

I served in an infantry corps, and therefore am not a judge.

MASTER.

That may be; but I commanded in the cavalry, and am a judge.

JAMES.

What then!

MASTER.

What then! I mean that you should go to this man, and propose that he sell us the horse. This is my intention.

JAMES.

JAMES.

It is a very foolish errand, but I will go to him. How much would you give him for the horse?

MASTER.

I would go the length of an hundred crowns . . .

James, after recommending to his Master not to suffer himself to fall asleep, went to meet the traveller; proposed to buy his horse, paid for him, and brought him off.—Well, James, said the Master, if you have your presentiments I have mine too. The horse looks well; the merchant will swear to you, that he is free from faults; but, in dealing about horses, every man will jockey you if he can.

JAMES.

And in what will men not jockey you?

MASTER.

You shall mount him, and give me yours.

JAMES.

A bargain.

Conceive them mounted on horseback, and James proceeding:

When I left home, my father, my mother, and my godfather, had all given me something, each according to his means. I had in reserve five louis, of which John, my elder brother had made

made me a present, when he set out on his unfortunate journey to Lisbon . . . (Here James began to weep, and his Master to remind him, that this was decreed on high). It is true, sir, I have said so myself an hundred times, and yet I cannot refrain from crying . . . Then James sighed and wept afresh. The Master took his pinch of snuff, and looked at his watch to see what o'clock it was. After taking his horse's bridle between his teeth, and wiping his eyes with both his hands, James continued,—

With John's five louis, what I could raise, and the presents of my relations and friends, I had made up a purse, from which I had not drawn a farthing. I found this treasure very seasonable; what say you, Master?

MASTER.

It was impossible that you could remain any longer in the cottage.

JAMES.

Even with paying.

MASTER.

But what took your brother John to Lisbon?

JAMES.

I think you are endeavouring to divert me from the thread of my narrative. Your questions have already carried me the tour of the world before I have reached the end of my amours.

MASTER.

What does it signify, provided you speak and I listen? Are not these the two

two important points? Instead of grumbling you ought rather to thank me.

JAMES.

My brother went to Lisbon to seek repose. John was a lad of spirit, and it is to this he owes his misfortunes: it had been better for him that he had been a dull fellow like me; but this was decreed on high. It was decreed, that a mendicant Carmelite, who came every season to our village, in quest of eggs, wool, hemp, fruit and wine, should lodge at my father's house; that he should debauch my brother John, and that my brother John should assume the habit of a monk.

MASTER.

So your brother John was a Carmelite?

JAMES.

JAMES.

Yes, sir, and a bare-footed Carmelite.—He was active, intelligent, acute, and the oracle of the village. He was expert in reading and writing, and from his youth he was employed in deciphering and in copying old parchments. He passed through all the degrees of the order; he was porter, butler, gardener, sexton, assistant steward and treasurer, in succession: from the line which he was in he would have made a fortune for us all. He married, and married well, two of our sisters, and some other girls of the village. He could not psas through the streets without fathers, mothers and children going up and accosting him, Good day, brother John; how do you do, brother John? When he entered a house, it

was

was certain that the blessing of Heaven entered with him, and that, when there was a daughter in it, in two months after his visit, she was married. Poor brother John ! Ambition ruined him. The steward of the house, to whom he was appointed assistant, was advanced in years. The monks gave out, that he had formed a design of succeeding to him at his death ; and, in order to effect this object, that he threw all the archives into confusion, burned the ancient registers, and forged new ones ; so that at the death of the old steward, the devil himself could make neither head nor tail of the titles of the community. Was a paper at any time necessary to be produced, they must lose a month in searching for it ; and, after all, it often could not be found. The fathers perceived the artifice of brother John

John and the object that he had in view; they took it into serious consideration, and brother John, instead of being steward, as he had flattered himself, was reduced to bread and water, and strict discipline, till he delivered up to another the key of his registers. Monks are implacable. When they had drawn from brother John all the explanations which they wanted, they made him coal-porter in the laboratory, where they distilled Carmelite's water. Brother John, formerly treasurer to the order and assistant steward, now reduced to a coalman! Brother John had spirit; he could not support this diminution of importance and splendour, and only wanted an opportunity of with-drawing himself from his state of humiliation,

At that time there came to the house a young father, who passed for the wonder of the order, both in the tribunal and in the pulpit; his name was father Ange. He had fine eyes and a comely face, hands and arms of perfect symmetry. He was constantly preaching and confessing; the old directors were forsaken by their votaries, who attached themselves to young father Ange. On the Sunday and grand festival evenings, the closet of father Ange was surrounded with male and female penitents, and the old fathers of the monastery in vain waited in their deserted cells for their wonted practice, a circumstance at which they were exceedingly chagrined .... But let us leave the history of brother John, sir, and resume that of my amours, which will perhaps be more entertaining.

MASTER.

MASTER.

No, no; let us take a pinch of snuff, look what o'clock it is, and proceed.

JAMES.

Well, I consent, since it is your wish ... but James's horse was of a different opinion; he all of a sudden takes the bit between his teeth, and plunges into a quagmire. James in vain squeezes with his knees, and holds the bridle short by the reins, the stubborn animal gives a sudden jerk, springs from the midst of the quagmire, and flies like lightning to the summit of an eminence, where he stops short, and where James, looking around him, finds himself under a gibbet

Another

Another would not have failed, reader, to supply the gallows with a victim, and thus to provide James with a subject for some woeful discovery. Had I done so, you would, perhaps, have believed it; for there sometimes are more extraordinary accidents; but the circumstance would not have been true: there was no person on the gibbet.—

James gave his horse time to recover his breath, who descended the hill of his own accord, regained the marsh and replaced James beside his Master, who said to him: Ah! my friend, what a fright you have given me! I considered you as a dead man... But you are dreaming; what are you dreaming about?

JAMES.

JAMES.

About what I saw up there.

MASTER.

And what did you see?

JAMES.

A gallows; a gibbet.—

MASTER.

The devil, you did! That was a bad omen; but recollect your doctrine. If it was decreed on high, do what you will, you shall be hanged, my good friend; and if it is not decreed on high, the horse will be found to be a false prophet. If this animal be not inspired he is subject to cross fits; you must take care of him. After a few moments

moments silence, James rubbed his brow and shook his ears, as one naturally does when he wants to dismiss an unpleasant idea, and abruptly resumes his narrative :—

The old monks held a council and resolved, at all events, and by any means, to rid themselves of this young-ster, who had reduced them to such a state of humiliation. Do you know what they did ?.... Master, you are not attending.

MASTER.

Attending! I am attending; go on.

JAMES.

They suborned the porter who was an old knave like themselves. This old rascal accused the young father of

having taken liberties with one of the devotees, in the parlour, and swore that he had seen him. It might be true, or it might be false, who knows? A pleasant circumstance enough, was, that the next morning after this accusation was lodged, the prior of the house was summoned by a surgeon to satisfy a demand for medicines which he had administered, and attendance, which he had given upon this scoundrel of a porter, in the course of a fashionable disease . . . Master, you are not attending, and I know what occupies your thoughts; I'll wager it is the gibbet.—

MASTER.

I cannot deny it.

JAMES.

JAMES.

I have caught your eyes fixed upon my visage; do you think that it foreboades misfortune?

MASTER.

No; no.

JAMES.

That is as much as to say, yes, yes. Well! if you are afraid of me we had better separate.

MASTER.

Come, James, you lose heart; can't you repose confidence in yourself?

JAMES.

No, sir; who is there that can trust himself?

MASTER.

Every good man. Does James, honest James, not feel a horror at crime? . . . Come, James, let us finish this dispute, and resume your narrative.

JAMES.

In consequence of this calumny, this infamous slander of the porter, they thought themselves entitled to play a thousand devils' tricks, and to commit a thousand wicked acts against poor father Ange, whose head appeared to be deranged. They then called a physician whom they bribed, and who attested, that the monk was out of his judgment, and that his native air would be necessary for his recovery. Had the object been to seclude or to confine father Ange, the business had been soon

soon managed; but among the devotees to whom he had acted as father-confessor, there were some ladies of quality to manage. They spoke to them of their director with a pretended commiseration: Alas! poor father Ange! what a pity it is! he was the glory of our community!—What is this that has befallen him?—To this question they replied only with a profound sigh, and lifting their eyes to heaven; if they insisted, they bowed their heads and were silent. This mummery they sometimes accompanied with such exclamations as the following: O God! what poor creatures we are! . . . He has still some surprising moments . . . some gleams of genius . . . It will return, perhaps, but there is little hope . . . What a loss our religion has sustained! . . . .—In the

mean time they were employed in undermining him with double industry; they omitted no artifice actually to bring father Ange into the situation to which they gave out that he was reduced; and they would have succeeded had not brother John taken compassion upon him. How shall I tell you the rest? One night, when we were asleep, we heard a knock at the door; we rose, we opened it to father Ange and my brother in disguise. They passed the following day in the house; the next morning at day-break they decamped. They set out with their hands full; for John, embracing me, said: I have married your sisters. Had I remained in the convent two years longer in the situation I once enjoyed, you should have been one of the greatest

farmers in the district; but every thing has changed, and this is all that I can do for you. Farewell, James; if the father and I are fortunate, you shall receive some testimony of it.... he then put into my hand the five Louis which I have already mentioned, with five others for the last of the girls in the village that he married, and who had just been brought to bed of a fine boy, as like brother John as one egg to another.

MASTER.

(His snuff-box opened and his watch replaced.)

And what took them to Lisbon?

JAMES.

They went in quest of an earthquake, which could not happen without crush-

ing them to pieces, swallowing them up, and burning them to ashes, as it was decreed on high.

MASTER.

Ah! these monks! these monks!

JAMES.

The best of them is not good for much.

MASTER.

I know it better than you.

JAMES.

Have you passed through their hands?

MASTER.

I shall tell you at another time.

JAMES.

But what makes them so bad?

MASTER.

MASTER.

I believe it is because they are monks
... Let us return to your amours.

JAMES.

No sir; we'll not return to them.

MASTER.

Don't you wish to make me acquainted with them?

JAMES.

I still wish it; but destiny, destiny is of another mind. Don't you see that I no sooner open my mouth than the devil interferes, and some accident intervenes to interrupt my discourse? I shall not finish them. I tell you this is decreed on high.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Try, my friend.

JAMES.

But if you would begin the history of yours, perhaps it would break the incantation, and then mine would proceed more smoothly. I have a notion that the one depends upon the other. Look you, sir, I think sometimes that I have communications from destiny.

MASTER.

And you always experience the advantage of attending to them.

JAMES.

Yes, I do; witness the day that I received the information, that your watch was on the pedlar's back . . .

The

The Master fell a yawning, and as he yawned, he rapped his fingers upon his snuff-box, and rapping upon his snuff-box, he looked as far as he could see, and, in looking abroad, he said to James; Don't you observe something upon your left.

JAMES.

Yes, and I will lay you a wager that it is something to prevent me from continuing my history, or you from beginning yours . . .

James was right. As the object they saw was advancing to them, and they were travelling towards it, these two opposite motions diminished the distance, and they soon were able to distinguish a carriage covered with black cloth, drawn with four black horses

with

with black housings, which covered their heads and came down to their feet; behind were two domestics in black, and behind them two others, each upon a black horse, caparisoned in black. Upon the box a black coachman, with his hat slouched and encircled with a long crape, which waved over his left shoulder. The coachman was leaning his head to one side, permitting the reins to hang loose, and seemed less to conduct the horses than they to conduct him. When our travellers had come up along side of this hearse, James suddenly utters a cry, falls, rather than dismounts, from his horse, tears his hair, rolls himself on the ground, exclaiming, My captain! my poor captain! It must be he, I cannot doubt it; see there his arms! ... In fact, there was in the carriage a long coffin under a pall, upon the pall a sword

a sword and a ribband, and by the side of the coffin a priest with his breviary in his hand, singing psalms. The carriage continued to move on, James following it with lamentations, and he followed by his Master with curses. James was informed by the domestics, that the procession was that of his captain, who had died in the neighbouring town, from which they were conveying his body to the burying place of his ancestors. When this soldier was, by the death of an officer, his friend, a captain in the same regiment, deprived of the satisfaction of fighting at least once a week, he fell into a deep melancholy, under which he sunk at the end of a few months. James, after having bestowed upon the memory of his captain that tribute of praise, tears and regret, which he was bound to pay, made his apologies to his Master, again mounted

mounted his horse, and they proceeded in silence.

But for God's sake, reader, you will say, Where were they going? But, in God's name, I must answer, Do we always know where we are going? And you yourself, pray where are you going? Shall I remind you of the adventure of Æsop? His master Xantippe said to him, one evening in summer or winter, for the Greeks used the bath at all seasons of the year: Æsop, Go to the bath; if there are few people we shall bathe . . . Æsop goes out. On his way he met the Athenian patrole; Where are you going?—Where am I going, replied Æsop, I can't tell!—You can't tell? Walk to prison.—Heyday! continued Æsop, Did I not say properly, that I knew not where I

was

was going? I meant to go to the bath, and behold I am going to prison . . . James followed his Master, as you do yours, and his Master followed his again, as James followed him.—But who was the master of James's Master? —Very fine! Are masters then so difficult to be found in the world? James's master had a hundred for one, like you. Among so many masters he must not have met with a good one, for he changed them every day. He was a man, reader, a passionate man, like you; a curious man, like you, reader; an impertinent man, like you, reader; a man like you, reader, constantly proposing questions? And why was he so much addiced to asking questions? A pretty question! He asked questions, in order to learn what he might repeat, like you, reader . . . The Master said to James,

You

You do not seem disposed to resume the history of your amours.

JAMES.

Alas, my poor captain! He is gone whither we are all going, and where it is very extraordinary that he did not sooner arrive. Ahi!...ahi!

MASTER.

But, James, you are crying, I believe?

... "Give vent to your grief without restraint, because you may weep without shame; his death liberates you from the observance of those scrupulous decorums, by which, during his life, you were constrained. You have not the same reasons to dissemble your grief as you had to dissemble your happiness. The same consequences will not be inferred from your tears that would

would have been drawn from your joy. Indulgence is easily extended to misery. And since you must, on the present occasion, display either sensibility or ingratitude, every thing well considered, it is better to reveal a weakness than to incur the suspicion of a vice. I wish your grief to be free that it may prove less pungent: I wish it to be violent that it may be less tedious. Recal to your fancy, even exaggerate, his merit, his penetration in fathoming subjects the most profound, his subtlety in discussing questions the most delicate; the solidity of his taste, by which he was attached to the most important; the fertility which he diffused over the most barren; the dexterity with which he defended the accused. His compassion gave him a thousand times more fire than interest

self-love can infuse into the guilty; he was only severe upon himself. Far from seeking to excuse the slight faults which escaped him, he employed all the malignity of an enemy in displaying them to himself with exaggeration; and all the ingenuity of a rival, in detracting from the merit of his virtues, by a rigorous examination of the motives by which, perhaps unconsciously, he had been determined. Prescribe no other bounds to your sorrow but those which time shall assign. Let us acquiesce in the universal order when we are deprived of our friends, as we will resign ourselves when it shall be pleased to dispose of us. Let us receive the decree of fate, by which they are condemned, without despair, as when it is pronounced against ourselves we will accept it without resistance.

The

The duties which extend to the tomb are not the last duties which the soul pays to the departed. The earth which lies loose upon the new-covered grave, in time shall consolidate over the ashes of your lover; but your soul will preserve all its sensibility."

JAMES.

This is all very fine, my good Master, but what, in the devil's name, is it to the purpose? I have lost my captain; I am afflicted, and you repeat to me, like a parrot, a shred of consolation made by some man or woman, for some other woman who had lost her lover.

MASTER.

I believe the author was a woman.

JAMES.

I again believe that it was a man: but, be it man or woman, once more I repeat, what, in the devil's name, is it to the purpose? Or do you take me for my captain's mistress? My captain, sir, was a brave man, and I, sir, have always been an honest lad.

MASTER.

James, who disputes it?

JAMES.

What the devil then is a piece of consolation, whether of man or woman to some other woman, to the purpose? Perhaps, by my importunities, you will be induced to tell me.

MASTER.

MASTER.

No, James, you must take this just as it stands.

JAMES.

I will muse on it then the rest of my life, till I divine what it is; I will stick to it till the day of judgment.

MASTER.

James, you seemed to listen with attention while I was reading.

JAMES.

Do you imagine we can refuse it to folly?

MASTER.

Very well, James.

JAMES.

I had almost burst out a laughing at the scrupulous decorum by which

I was constrained, while my captain was alive, and from which I had been freed by his death.

MASTER.

Very well, James; I have then gained what I proposed. Tell me, was it possible to employ a better mode of consolation? You were in tears: had I entertained you with the object of your grief, what would have been the consequence? Just this, that you had cried the more, and I should have completed your affliction. I have beguiled your sorrow, both by the affectation of my funeral oration, and by the little quarrel which had succeeded. Admit that just now the idea of your captain is as far off as the hearse which is conveying him to his long home. As

we

we proceed, I imagine you will be able to resume the history of your amours.

JAMES.

I am of the same opinion.—Doctor, said I to the surgeon, do you live far off?—A full quarter of a league at least.—Are you at all commodiously lodged?—Very much so.—Have you a bed to spare?—No.—What, not though you were paid, and well paid for it?—Oh! if you pay, and pay genteelly: excuse me. But, friend, you don't seem much in a situation to pay at all, much less to pay well.—That is my concern. And should I be well taken care of in your house?—Extremely well. I have a wife who has been accustomed to attend patients all her life. I have a daughter grown up, who can serve every customer, and who

can change you a dressing as well as myself.—How much may you ask for board, lodging, and attendance ?—The surgeon, rubbing his ear the while, said; For lodging ... board ... attendance ... But who is to be responsible for the payment ?—I shall pay you daily——Aye, this is speaking to the purpose.—But, sir, I believe you are not listening.

MASTER.

No, James. It was decreed on high, that for this time, which is not likely to be the last, you should speak without being attended to.

JAMES.

When we don't listen to the person that speaks, we either are thinking of nothing, or of something else than the subject

subject of which he talks: which of the two is your case?

MASTER.

The latter. I was musing upon the information you received from one of the domestics, that your captain had been deprived, by the death of his friend, of the pleasure of fighting at least once a week. Do you understand what this means?

JAMES.

Certainly.

MASTER.

To me it is an enigma, which you will oblige me by explaining.

JAMES.

And what the deuce will you make of it?

MASTER,

MASTER.

Not much. But you surely wish to be attended to when you speak ?

JAMES.

You need not have asked that question.

MASTER.

Well then: in conscience, I can't answer for myself, so much is my head perplexed with this unintelligible circumstance. Extricate me from the difficulty, I beseech you.

JAMES.

Instantly; but swear to me at least that you will give me no more interruptions.

MASTER:

MASTER.

Come what will, I swear.

JAMES.

The matter is, that my captain, a worthy well bred gentlemen, a man of merit, one of the best officers in the service, but a man somewhat heteroclite, had met and formed a friendship with another officer of the same corps; a worthy man too, well bred, accomplished, a good officer like himself; but, like him too, of an heteroclite turn of mind.

James was about to begin the history of his captain, when they heard a numerous cavalcade of men and horses driving up behind them. It was the hearse they had seen, returning the way it came. It was surrounded . . . by the officers

officers of the revenue? No.—By the troopers of the Marshalsey?—Perhaps it was. However this matter may stand, the train was preceded by the priest in his cassock and surplice, with his hands tied behind his back; the black coachman, the two black valets, with their hands tied behind their backs. The person most surprised was James, who exclaimed, My captain, my poor captain is not dead, thank God! Then James set off full speed to meet the pretended funeral procession. He had not advanced thirty paces, when the officers of the revenue or the troopers of the Marshalsey level their pieces and cry; Stop, return the way you came or you are a dead man . . . James stopped short, and a moment consulted destiny in his own mind; which seemed to say, Return the way you came; which he accordingly did.

did. His Master said, hey-day, James! what is the matter?

JAMES.

In faith, I know nothing of it at all.

MASTER.

And why?

JAMES.

I know no more of that than of the other.

MASTER.

You will find that they are smugglers who had filled the coffin with prohibited goods, and who have been betrayed to the Custom-house, by the very rogues from whom they were purchased.

JAMES.

But why the carriage with the arms of my captain?

MASTER.

MASTER.

Perhaps it was a rape. They had concealed in the coffin, who knows, a wife, a young lady, a nun; it is not the winding sheet that makes the corpse.

JAMES.

But why should the carriage bear the arms of my captain?

MASTER.

Be it any way you please, but go on with your captain's history.

JAMES.

You still run upon this history! But perhaps my captain is yet alive.

MASTER.

What difference does that make?

JAMES.

I do not much like to speak of the living, because we are now and then put to the blush for the good and the ill we have said of them; for the good which they destroy, and the bad which they repair.

MASTER.

Act the part neither of an insipid panegyrist nor of a virulent censor, speak of things as they are.

JAMES.

That is not so easy. Have we not our character, our interest, our taste, our passions, according to which we exaggerate or extenuate? Speak of things as they are! That does not happen perhaps twice in a day in the whole extent of a great city. And is the hearer a whit

whit better disposed than the speaker? No.—From which it must follow, that hardly twice in the day, throughout a great city, you are understood as you meant.

MASTER.

What the deuce, James, these maxims of yours go the length of entirely proscribing the use of our tongue and ears, and would prove nothing less than that we should cease to speak, to hear, and to believe! Nevertheless, speak you, as you feel, I shall hear you as I am disposed, and believe you as I may.

JAMES.

My dear Master, life passes away according to the rule of *qui pro quo*, you have the *qui pro quo* of love, the *qui pro quo* of friendship, the *qui pro quo* of politics,

litics, of finance, of the church, of the law, of trade, of wifes, of husbands.

MASTER.

Poh! Leave these *qui pro quo's* of yours, and understand that it is acting the part of a numskull, to involve yourself in a chapter of morals, when you have to do with an historical fact. Come, come! to the history of your captain?

JAMES.

If there is almost nothing said in the world, which is understood as it was meant, there is another thing much worse, which is, that we do almost nothing, which is judged according to the principle on which it was performed.

MASTER.

There is not, I dare say, a head under the heavens which contains so many paradoxes as thine.

JAMES.

And where would be the harm in that? A paradox is not always a falsehood.

MASTER.

True.

JAMES.

My captain and I were passing through Orleans. The whole conversation of the town, turned upon an adventure that had recently occurred to a citizen of the place, called M. le Pelletier, a man penetrated with so profound a compassion for the unfortunate, that after having

ing, by boundless charities, reduced a considerable fortune to a pittance barely adequate to his necessities, he went about from door to door, seeking, from the wealth of others, that relief to the unfortunate which his own situation no longer enabled him to supply.

MASTER.

And can you believe that two opinions could exist, with regard to the conduct of this man?

JAMES.

Not among the poor, but almost all the rich, without exception, considered him as a kind of lunatic, and his relations had well nigh got him interdicted as a prodigal. While we were refreshing at an inn, a crowd of idle people had assembled round a sort of orator, the

barber of the street, and were saying to him, You were there; pray do you inform us how the matter stood.—Most willingly, replied this street orator, who wished for nothing better than an opportunity to harangue. M. Aubertot, one of my customers, whose house is directly opposite to the church of the Capuchins, was standing at his door, M. le Pelletier accosted him and said, M. Aubertot, will you give me any thing for my friends? for so he calls the poor, as you know.—Not to day M. le Pelletier; M. le Pelletier presses him: Did you but know in whose favour I solicited your charity! It is a poor woman who is just brought to bed, and who has not a rag in which to wrap her infant.—I cannot.—It is for a young and beautiful girl, destitute of bread and without employment, whom your liberality,

liberality, perhaps, will save from ruin. —I cannot.—It is for a workman who depended upon the labour of his hands for subsistance, and who has just broken his leg by a fall from a scaffold.—I cannot, I tell you.—Come, come, M. Aubertot, suffer yourself to be touched, and be assured that you will never have an opportunity of performing an action more meritorious—I cannot, I cannot. —My dear, my compassionate M. Aubertot! . . . M. le Pelletier, do not tease me so; when I have a mind to give, I do not require entreaties . . . Saying this, M. Aubertot turns his back, retires from the door into his ware-room, whither M. le Pelletier follows. From the ware-room he follows him into the back shop, from the back shop into his apartment, there M. Aubertot, fatigued by the importunities of M. le Pelletier,

gave him a box on the ear . . . At this my captain got up abruptly, and says to the orator, And did he not put him to death?—No, sir, are people to be put to death in this way?—A blow, zounds! A blow! And what then did he do?—What then did he do after he received the blow? Assuming a smiling countenance, he said to M. Aubertot, This then is for me; but my poor . . . Here all the auditors burst out in a cry of admiration, except my captain, who addressed them: This M. le Pelletier of yours, gentlemen, is nothing but a beggar, a wretch, a poltroon, a scoundrel, to whom still this sword should have done speedy justice had I been there; and your M. Aubertot had been fortunate had he got off for his nose and his two ears.—The orator replied: I see, sir, you would not have allowed time for

for this insolent man to have acknowledged his fault, thrown himself at the feet of M. le Pelletier, and presented him his purse.—No, surely!—You are a soldier, and M. le Pelletier is a christian; you have not the same ideas of a blow.—The cheek of every man of honour is the same.—That is not exactly what the gospel says.—My gospel is in my heart, in my scabbard, and I know no other . . .—Yours, Master, is I know not where, mine is decreed on high; every one appreciates injuries and favours in his own way, and, perhaps, we do not form the same judgment of them any two moments of our life.

MASTER.

What then, cursed babbler, what then?

When James at any time found that his Master had grown testy, he was silent, fell a musing, and frequently only broke silence, with a remark associated with something in his mind, but as little connected with the conversation, as the subject of a book in which you have passed a number of leaves. This was precisely his case when he said, my dear Master . . .

MASTER.

Ah! you have at last recovered the use of your tongue! I am heartily glad of it for both our sakes; for I was beginning to get dull from not having your conversation to amuse me, and you from not enjoying the exercise of speaking. Speak on then . . .

James was a second time going to begin the history of his captain, when his horse springing suddenly out of the high

high road to the right, carried him across a field, the distance of a full quarter of a league, and stopped short under a gallows . . . Under a gallows? A strange disposition of the horse, this! to carry his master to the gallows! . . . What is the meaning of this, said James? Can it be a warning of destiny?

MASTER.

There is no doubt of it, my friend; your horse is inspired, but the plague is, that all these omens, inspirations, and warnings from on high, communicated through the medium of dreams and apparitions go for nought, you cannot provide against the event. My dear friend, I advise you to settle matters with your conscience, to arrange your little affairs, and to dispatch as quickly as you can the history of your captain

and

and that of your amours, for I shall be vexed to lose you without having heard them. You may be as careful of yourself as you may, but what will this avail? Nothing. The decree of destiny, pronounced at two different times by your horse, shall be accomplished. Consider, have you nothing to restore to any person? Trust me with your last will, and be assured it shall be faithfully executed. If you have taken any thing from me I give it you; only ask pardon of God, and in the time that you have to live, be it longer or shorter, rob me no more.

JAMES.

There is nothing in the past with which I can reproach myself, I have no account to settle with the justice of men. I have neither committed murder, robbery, nor rape.

MASTER.

MASTER.

So much the worse; I should rather that the crime had been committed, than that it had yet to be committed, and for a certain reason.

JAMES.

But, sir, it is perhaps not on my own but on some other person's account that I am to be hanged.

MASTER.

It may be so.

JAMES.

Perhaps I am to be hanged after I am dead.

MASTER.

That may be too.

JAMES.

JAMES.

Perhaps I shall not be hanged at all.

MASTER.

That I much doubt.

JAMES.

It is perhaps decreed on high, that I shall only assist in hanging another; who this other is, sir, God only knows, and whether he is near or at a distance?

MASTER.

Master James, you shall be hanged since fate intends it, and your horse has told you; but be not insolent: give over your impertinent conjectures, and tell me, without delay, the history of your captain.

JAMES.

JAMES.

Do not trouble yourself, sir; honest people have sometimes been hanged, it is a *qui pro quo* of justice.

MASTER.

These *qui pro quo's* are distressing. Let us speak about something else.

James, who was a little heartened by the different interpretations which he had found for the prognostication of the horse, said:

When I entered the regiment there were in it two officers who were nearly equal in age, birth, service, and merit. One of them was my captain. The only difference between them was, that the one was rich and the other was not. My captain was the rich one. This resemblance was likely to produce either a very

a very strong sympathy or an inveterate animosity: it produced both . . .

(Here James stopped, and this he did several times in the course of his recital, as often indeed as his horse turned his head to the right and to the left. When he went on again, he always repeated his last phrase, as if he had had the hiccough.)

It produced both. Some days they were the best friends in the world, on others they were mortal enemies. On these days of friendship they courted one another's company, they entertained each other, they mutually communicated their pains, their pleasures, their wants; they consulted together upon their most private concerns, their domestic interests, their hopes, their fears, their plans of advancement. Did they happen to meet next day? They passed without

out

out taking any notice of each other, or if they did it was in a saucy manner; they called one another sir, they exchanged high words, they drew their swords, they fought. If it so happened that one of them was wounded, the other threw himself down upon his companion, wept, and tore himelf like a madman, he attended him home and sat by his bed side tell he recovered. Eight days, a fortnight, a month after they renewed the quarrel, and we saw every moment two brave men . . . two sincere friends, exposed to fall by one another's hands, and, of the two, the survivor would certainly have been most to be pitied. The extravagance of their conduct had frequently been represented to them. I, who had permission from my captain to speak to him, I was accustomed to say,

But, sir, if you should chance to kill him! . . . When I uttered these words, he covered his eyes with his hands, and ran to his apartment like a mad man. In two hours after, either his companion brought him home wounded, or he performed a similar service to his companion. Neither my remonstrances, ... neither my remonstrances, nor those of others were of any avail; there was no remedy but to separate them.

The minister of war was informed of their singular perseverance in these two opposite extremes, and appointed my captain to the command of a place, with an express injunction immediately to repair to his post, and a prohibition to leave it. The other, by a similar prohibition, was fixed with his regiment . . . I believe this cursed horse

will make me mad . . . Scarcely had the orders of the minister arrived, when my captain, under pretence of going to thank him for the favour which had been conferred upon him, went to court, represented that he was rich, and that his poor companion had the same right to the favours of the king; that the post which he had received would recompense the services of his friend, and supply the deficiency of his fortune, circumstances which would communicate to him (the captain) the most lively satisfaction. As the minister had no other intention than to separate these two whimsical men; and as he could not help being touched with this generous conduct, it was determined . . . . You cursed animal why won't you hold your head right? . . . it was determined, that my captain should

remain with the regiment, and that his companion should go to take the com-mand of the place.

No sooner were they separated than they felt the loss of being deprived of each other's company; they fell into a profound melancholy. My captain asked leave of absence, that he might go and have the benefit of his native air; but, about two leagues off from the garrison, he sells his horse, puts on the disguise of a peasant, and walks towards the place where his friend com-manded. It appears that there was a scheme concerted between them. He arrives . . . . Go then wherever you please! Is there still another gibbet that you wish to visit? . . . . Take a hearty laugh, sir; this has a very plea-sant effect . . . . He arrives; but it was decreed

decreed on high that, notwithstanding certain precautions which they had taken to conceal the satisfaction they felt on seeing one another again, and not to neglect the external shew of subordination due from a peasant to a commander of a garrison, some officers who fell in with them by chance at this interview, and who were informed of their adventure, formed some suspicion, and went to give notice of it to the major of the fort.

He, being a prudent man, smiled at the information, but, at the same time, did not fail to attach to it all the importance which it deserved. He set spies to watch the commander. Their first report was, that the commander went out very little, and that the peasant never went out at all. It was im-

possible that these two men could live eight days together without being seized with their odd phrenzy, which assuredly returned.

You see, reader, how obliging I am; I might, by cracking my whip over the horses which drew the carriage covered with black, assemble at the door of the next inn, James, his Master, the revenue-officers, or the troopers of the Marshalsey, with the rest of their retinue, break off the history of James's captain, and exhaust your patience at my ease; but, in order to do this, I must tell a lie, and I am not fond of falsehood, unless when it serves some good purpose, or when I am compelled to it. The fact is, that James and his Master never saw the hearse again, and, that James, always uneasy about the pro-

propensity of his horse, continued his story.

One day the spies reported to the major, that there had been a serious quarrel between the commander and the peasant; that they immediately went out, the peasant going first and the commander following him with regret; and that they had gone into a banker's in the town, where they still were.

We afterwards learned, that, entertaining no hopes of seeing one another again, they had resolved upon a bitter contest, and that, sensible to the duties of the most tender friendship, at the moment when they were rouzed to the most savage pitch of ferocity, my captain, who, as I have told you . . . my

captain, who was rich, had insisted upon his companion accepting of a bill of exchange for twenty-four thousand livres, which might enable him to live in a foreign country, in case he (his captain) was killed, protesting that he would not fight till this preliminary point was settled; the other replying to this offer; Do you think, my friend, that if you are killed I shall survive you? . . . I hope, sir, you will not condemn me to finish our journey upon this whimsical animal . . .

They came out from the banker's, and walked towards the gate of the town where they were surrounded by the major and some officers. Though this meeting had the appearance of accident, our two friends, or our two enemies, if you please, did not mistake

its object. The peasant let himself be known for what he was. They passed the night in a private house. Next morning, at day-break, my captain, after having embraced his companion several times, parted with him, never to see him again. No sooner was he arrived in his native country than he died.

MASTER.

Who told you that he was dead?

JAMES.

But that coffin! and that carriage with his arms! My poor captain is dead; doubtless he is.

MASTER.

But the priest with his hands tied behind his back; and these officers of

the revenue, or troopers of the Marshalsey, and the return of the procession towards the city! Your captain is alive, I have no doubt; but do you know any thing of his comrade?

JAMES.

The history of his comrade is a beautiful line in the grand register, or the book which contains what is decreed on high.

MASTER.

I hope . . .

James's horse did not allow his Master time to conclude. He darted on like lightning, following the high road without deviating either to the right or to the left. James was out of sight, and his Master convinced that the

the road would end in a gallows, was like to burst his sides with laughing. And since James and his Master are entertaining only when together, and are good for nothing when separated, like Don Quixote and Sancho, and Richardet and Ferragus; a circumstance which the continuator of Cervantes, and the imitator of Ariosto Monsignor Forti-Guerra, have not sufficiently understood; reader, let us have a little chat till they are again brought together.

You are going to take the history of James's captain for a fiction, and you are wrong. I protest to you that precisely as he has recounted it to his Master was the recital which I heard of it at the Hospital of Invalids; I do not recollect the year; upon St. Louis's

day

day, at the table of Monsieur St. Etienne, the governor of the Hospital; and he who told the story, in presence of many other officers of the house acquainted with the fact, was a grave personnage, and one who had not at all the air of a jester. I repeat it, therefore for your benefit, as well now as in future; be circumspect, if you wish in this conversation of James and his Master, to distinguish the true from the false, the false from the true. You are now fairly warned, and I wash my hands of the consequences.—What a couple of very extraordinary men were these you tell me!—And is it this that excites your incredulity? In the first place, nature is so diversified, especially in characters and instincts, that there is nothing in the imagination of the poet so extrava-

gant of which observation and experience do not present us with the model. I myself, who now speak, have met with the fellow of the *Mock Doctor*, which, till then, I had considered as the most wild and entertaining of fictions.—What! the fellow of the husband whose wife says to him, I have three children on my hands; and who answers, Lay them down then . . . They ask for bread, give them a rod!—Precisely.—The following is the dialogue that passed between him and my wife: —Are you there, Monsieur Gousse?—Yes, madam, for I cannot be at two places at once.—Where are you come from?—From the place I went to.—What have you done there?—I have repaired a mill that was out of order.—Whose mill was it?—I know nothing of that; I did not go there to set the miller

miller to rights.—You are very well dressed, contrary to custom. Why, under this suit, which is very becoming, have you a dirty shirt?—Because I have no more than one.—And why no more?—Because I have no more than one body at a time.—My husband is not at home; but this will not prevent you from dining with me.—No; since I have given neither my stomach nor my appetite into your husband's keeping.—How does your wife?—Just as she pleases, that is her concern.—And your children?—Admirably!—And the boy that has such fine eyes, so plump, so pretty a skin?—Much better than the rest; he is dead.—Are you teaching them any thing?—No, madam.—What, neither to read nor write, nor to repeat their catechism?—Neither to read nor write, nor to repeat

their

their catechism.—But why so?—Because I was never taught any thing myself, and I am not the more ignorant for that. If they have talents they will do as I have done; if they are dunces, what I taught them would only make them greater fools. . . Should you ever meet with this original, you need not be of his acquaintance to use the freedom of addressing him. Take him into a tavern, tell him your business, propose that he should go with you twenty leagues off, he will accompany you: after having employed him, dismiss him without a penny; he will return perfectly satisfied with his treatment. Have you ever heard of one Premonval, a public teacher of mathematics at Paris? He was a friend of his . . . But James and his Master have perhaps again joined company; which

do

do you chuse, to proceed to them, or to remain with me? Gousse and Premonval kept a school together. Among the numerous scholars who attended, there was a young lady, called Miss Pigeon, the daughter of the celebrated artist who constructed those two planispheres which have been transported from the Royal Garden to the Hall of the Academy of Sciences. Miss Pigeon went every morning with her satchel under her arm, and her mathematical instrument case in her muff. One of the professors, Premonval, fell in love with his scholar, and, in spite of the propositions upon solids, inscribed upon the sphere, she was got with child. Father Pigeon was not a man to acquiesce with patience in the truth of this corollary. The situation of the lovers becomes em-

embarrassing; they hold a conference; but having nothing, nothing at all in the world, what could be the result of their deliberations? They call to their assistance their friend Gousse. The latter, without saying a word, sells his whole property, linen, clothes, instruments, furniture, books; raises a sum of money, hurries the two lovers into a post-chaise, accompanies them most cheerfully as far as the Alps; there he empties his purse of the little money that remained, presents them with it, embraces them, wishes them a good journey, returns on foot, begging his way as far as Lyons, where, by painting the rooms of a cloister of monks, he earned as much as enabled him to return to Paris without begging. —That was very fine.—Certainly! And, from this heroic action, you ima-

gine

gine that Gousse was possessed of a great fund of morality: No, indeed! be undeceived; he had no more idea of it than a horse.—Impossible!—It is true, however. I had employed him in a piece of business: I gave him a draft upon my agent for eighty livres; the sum was written in figures. What does my man, but add a cypher, and draws eight hundred livres!—Ah, shocking!—He is not more dishonest when he robs me, than generous when he strips himself to serve his friend. He is an original, destitute of principles. The eighty livres were not sufficient for him; with a dash of the pen he procured the eight hundred, for which he had occasion. And then with what valuable books was I presented?—What, however, have we to do with these books?—But James and his

his Master? James's amours? Ah, reader, the patience with which you attend to me demonstrates the little interest you feel in my two heroes; and I am tempted to leave them where they are... I wanted a book of great value, he brought it me. Some time after I had occasion for another valuable book, and again he furnished me with it. I wished to pay for it; he refused to accept the price. I had occasion for a third; This time, said he, I cannot supply you. You should have told me sooner; my doctor of the Sorbonne is dead.—

And what connection has the death of your doctor of the Sorbonne with the book that I wish to procure? Did you take the two former out of his library? Assuredly!—Without his leave? Poh!

what need had I of that, in order to administer distributive justice? I only displaced these books for the better, by transferring them from a place where they were useless, to another where they were to be used with advantage . . . After this shall we venture to judge of men from their conduct? But there is the story of Gousse and his wife which is best of all . . . I understand you, you have enough of it, and your opinion would be for setting out to rejoin our two travellers. Reader, you treat me like an automaton: this is not polite; proceed with James's amours; no more of the amours of James; I wish to hear the history of Gousse; now I have enough of it. Doubtless, I ought sometimes to proceed according to your inclination, but I must sometimes follow my own; not to mention that every hearer

hearer who allows me to begin a recital, pledges himself to hear the conclusion.

In the first place I have told you; but to speak of a first place is to announce at least a second. In the second place then . . . Attend to me or not, as you please, I shall speak all alone . . . . James's captain and his comrade might have been tormented with a violent and secret jealousy. It is a feeling which friendship never extinguishes. Nothing is so difficult to excuse as merit. Might they not have dreaded a favour by which both of them would have been equally offended? Without being conscious of it they were desirous to rid themselves of a dangerous competitor; they wished to smooth the way for some future opportunity. But how can

such an idea be entertained of him, who so generously resigns his command of the garrison to his indigent friend? He resigns it, 'tis true, but had it been taken from him, he had reclaimed it with his sword. A preference among soldiers, if it does not confer an honour upon him who receives it, throws a disgrace upon his rival. But dropping all this discussion, let us say, that this was the character of their extravagance. Has not every man one of his own? This of our two officers was, for many ages, that of all Europe. It was called the spirit of chivalry. All that splendid multitude, armed from head to foot, decorated with different liveries of love, capering upon palfreys, their lances in their hand, their visors up or down, regarding each other with disdain, measuring each other with the eye, launching mutual defiance, overthrow-

overthrowing each other in the dust, strewing the extent of a vast tournament with fragments of broken arms, were only friends jealous of the merit which was in fashion. These friends, at the very moment when they held their lances couched, each at the extremity of the career, and had pressed with the spur the sides of their coursers, became the most terrible enemies. They darted upon each other with the same fury which they would have employed in the field of battle. In truth, our two officers were only two paladins born in our days, with the manners of ancient times. Every virtue and every vice appears, and again goes out of fashion. Strength of body had its day, dexterity in exercises had its season. Bravery is sometimes more, sometimes less consi-

less it is the subject of vanity, the less it is the theme of panegyric. Observe with attention, the inclinations of men; you will find some who seem to have come into the world too late. They belong to another age. And may we not suppose that our two soldiers had engaged in those daily and perilous combats, solely from the desire of finding the weak side of his rival and obtaining the superiority? Duels occur in society under every variety of form; among priests, among lawyers, among scholars, among philosophers. Every class has its lance and its champions, and our most respectable and amusing assemblies are nothing but little tournaments, where sometimes they wear the livery of love in their hearts if not upon their shoulders. The more numerous the spectators the more keen is

the

the tilt; the presence of the ladies carries the zeal and the obstinacy of the combatants to the highest pitch, and the shame of being overcome before them is almost never forgotten.

But, James! . . . James had cleared the gates of the city, traversed the streets amidst the shouts of children, and reached the extremity of the opposite suburbs, where his horse, darting into a little court, there occurred between the lintel of the door and James's head, a terrible encounter, in which the lintel must either have been displaced or James thrown backwards. As you may easily imagine it was the latter that happened. James fell down with his head cut and senseless. He was raised up, and recalled to life with spirituous liquors; I believe too that he was let blood by the

master of the house.—This person then was a surgeon?—No. Meanwhile his Master had arrived and enquired after him of every one he met. Did you not see a tall thin person, mounted upon a pyed horse?—He has just passed, flying as if the devil were in him; he must have reached his master's house. —And who is his master?—The hangman.—The hangman!—Yes, for the horse belongs to him.—Where does the hangman live?—A considerable way off, but you need not give yourself the trouble to go that length, for here are his people bringing, in all probability, the person you seek, and whom we took for one of his valets . . . And who was this that spoke to James's Master? —It was an inn-keeper at whose door he had stopped, it was impossible to be mistaken. He was thick and short like a tun,

a tun, with his shirt tucked up to the elbows, a cotton cap upon his head, a kitchen apron round him, and a large knife by his side. Haste, haste, said James's Master, a bed for this poor devil, a surgeon, a physician, an apothecary . . . In the interim they had set James upon his feet, his forehead bound up with a large thick bandage which covered his eyes.—James! James!—Is it you, Master?—Yes, yes, look at me then. — I cannot.—What has befallen you?—Ah, the horse! the cursed horse! I will tell you all the circumstances to-morrow, if I do not die in the course of the night . . .—While they were carrying him up stairs to his chamber, his Master went before, crying, take care, go gently, gently, zounds, you will hurt him! You, who carry his limbs, turn to the right; you, who

bear up his head, turn to the left . . . And James said in a low tone of voice: it was then decreed on high ! . . .

No sooner was James laid upon his bed than he fell into a profound sleep. His Master passed the night beside his pillow feeling his pulse and incessantly moistening his bandage with anodynes. James was surprised when he awoke to find him thus employed, and said to him: What are you doing here?

MASTER.

I am watching you: you are my servant when I am sick or in health, but I am yours when you are ill.

JAMES.

I am satisfied to find that you possess the principles of humanity, it is not a quality

quality which enters too much into the conduct of masters toward their servants.

MASTER.

How is your head ?

JAMES.

As well as the lintel against which it struck.

MASTER.

Take this sheet between your teeth and shake your head well ... What do you feel?

JAMES.

Nothing, the pitcher seems to be quite sound.

MASTER.

So much the better. You wish to rise I think ?

JAMES.

JAMES.

And what would you have me do?

MASTER.

I would have you rest yourself.

JAMES.

My opinion is that we should breakfast and set out.

MASTER.

And what is become of the horse?

JAMES.

I left him with his master, an honest civil man, who took him back at the same price at which he sold him to us.

MASTER.

MASTER.

And do you know who this honest, this civil man is?

JAMES.

No.

MASTER.

I'll tell you when we are on our journey.

JAMES.

Why not now? What mystery is there in this?

MASTER.

Mystery or not, what necessity is there for me telling you at this moment rather than at another?

JAMES.

There is none.

MASTER.

MASTER.

But you must have a horse.

JAMES.

The landlord of the inn will perhaps cheerfully give us one of his.

MASTER.

Stay still a moment, I will go and see about this.

James's master goes down, orders breakfast, buys a horse, returns up stairs, and finds James dressed. They breakfasted and set out, James protesting that it was unpolite in him not to pay a visit of civility to the citizen, at whose door he had been almost killed, and who had so obligingly come to his assistance; his Master, endeavouring to make

make him easy upon the point of etiquette, by an assurance, that he had handsomely rewarded the attendants who had carried him to the inn; James, pretending that money given to the servants did not cancel his obligations to the master, and that it was such circumstances as this that gave men a regret and disgust at doing kind offices; besides that, particularly as it concerned himself, it had the appearance of ingratitude. I know, Master, what this man will say of me, from what I would have said of him, had I been in his place and he in mine . . . They had cleared the town, when they met a tall athletic man, dressed in a hat with broad trimmings and clothes laced at every seam walking alone, if you except two large dogs that went before him . . . James no sooner perceived him than he alighted from his horse,

horse, calling out: It is he! and instantly threw himself round his neck. The man, with the two dogs, appearing to be very much embarrassed at James's caresses, gently pushed him back, and said to him, Sir, you do me too much honour.—No, I do not! 'Tis to you I owe my life, and I cannot sufficiently express my sense of the obligations which your kindness has laid me under. —You do not know who I am!—Are not you the obliging citizen who gave me assistance, who bled me and who dressed my wound, when my horse . . . —It is true, I am.—Are not you the honest citizen who took back the horse at the same price at which you sold him to me?—The same.—James embraced first one cheek and then the other; his Master laughed, and the two dogs came round snuffing, and wondering at

a scene

a scene which they now witnessed for the first time. James after having added to these demonstrations of gratitude, abundance of bows which his benefactor did not return and abundance of good wishes which were coldly received, mounts his horse and says to his Master: I have a most profound veneration for this man with whose character you must make me acquainted.

MASTER.

And how came he, James, to be so venerable in your eyes?

JAMES.

From his not attaching any importance to the services that he renders, he must be naturally obliging and long accustomed to the exercise of beneficence.

MASTER.

Why do you suppose this?

JAMES.

I infer it from the coldness and indifference with which he received my acknowledgments; he did not salute me, he did not say a word, he seemed to have forgotten me, and perhaps, at this moment, he is saying to himself with a sentiment of contempt; This traveller must be very little acquainted with beneficence, and the exercise of justice must be very difficult to him, since he is so affected with it . . . What is there so absurd in what I say as to make you laugh so heartily? . . Be it what it may, tell me that man's name, that I may put it down in my memorandum book.

MASTER.

MASTER.

Most willingly; write.

JAMES.

Well, say on.

MASTER.

Write; the man for whom I entertain the most profound veneration . . .

JAMES.

The most profound veneration . . .

MASTER.

Is . . .

JAMES.

Is . . .

MASTER.

The hangman of ***

JAMES.

The hangman!

MASTER.

Yes, yes, the hangman.

JAMES.

Can you tell me where's the point of this jest?

MASTER.

I am not in jest. Let us review your progress. You want a horse, by chance you address a passenger and the passenger is a hangman. The horse carries you twice to the foot of a gibbet, and the third time he sets you down at a hangman's house; there you fall lifeless from his back; from thence they carry you, where? to an inn, a lodging-house, a common

a common asylum. James, are you acquainted with the history of Socrates' death?

JAMES.

No.

MASTER.

He was an Athenian philosopher. It is long since it was dangerous to act the part of a philosopher among fools. His fellow citizens condemned him to drink hemlock. Well! Socrates acted as you have done; he used the executioner, who presented it, with as much politeness as you did. James, you are a sort of a philosopher you'll confess. I know well that this is a class of men extremely obnoxious to the great, to whom they will not pay homage; to magistrates, whose office it is to protect those prejudices which it is the object of philosophy to

destroy; to priests who seldom see them at their altars; to poets, a race of men destitute of principle, and who foolishly consider philosophy as the bane of the fine arts, without recollecting that even those among them, who indulge in the severe species of satyr, are only flatterers; to the great body of the people in fine, who are the slaves of the tyrants who oppress them, of the knaves who deceive them, and of the buffoons by whom they are amused. Then you see I am aware of the danger of your profession and of the importance of the confession that I desire you to make, but I shall not abuse your confidence. James, my friend, you are a philosopher, I am concerned about you, and if we are permitted to read the future in the present, or if what is decreed on high is ever revealed to men long before the event

take

takes place, I presume that your death will be philosophic, and that you will put on the noose with as good a grace as Socrates received the cup of hemlock.

JAMES,

Master, a prophet could not speak more to the purpose; but, fortunately!...

MASTER.

You are not credulous; a circumstance which begins to confirm my presentiment.

JAMES.

And do you believe it, sir?

MASTER.

I do; but I do not believe it will take place without some just cause.

JAMES.

And what cause?

MASTER.

Least said is soonest mended.

JAMES.

What of your presentiments?

MASTER.

I laugh at them; but, I confess, I join trembling to my mirth. There are some of them which have such a striking character! We have imbibed these stories so early! If your dreams were realized five or six times, and if you should chance to dream that your friend was dead, you would go to his house early in the morning, to see whether he was or not. But the presenti-

sentiments, the influence of which it is impossible to resist, are those especially which occur at the moment when the thing is passing at a distance, and which have a symbolical cast.

JAMES.

You are sometimes so profound and so sublime, that I do not understand you. Can't you illustrate this by an example?

MASTER.

There is nothing easier. A woman lived in the country with her husband who was fourscore years of age, and afflicted with the gravel. The husband left the wife and came to town, to undergo an operation. On the evening in which the operation was to be performed, he wrote to his wife; "At the hour that you re-

ceive this letter, I shall be under the knife of brother Cosmo.". . . You have seen those marriage rings which separate into two parts; upon each of which the names of husband and wife are engraved. Well! the woman had one of these upon her finger when she opened her husband's letter. At that instant the two halves of the ring separated; that with her own name upon it remained on her finger, that with her husband's fell broken upon the letter which she was reading . . . Tell me, James, Do you think that there is any head sufficiently strong, and any mind sufficiently firm, not to be more or less shaken by such an incident, in such circumstances? Of course, the woman thought that he was dead. Her agonies lasted till the next day, when her husband wrote her, that he had got well

well over the operation, that he was out of danger, and that he flattered himself with the prospect of embracing her before the end of the month.

JAMES.

And did he in fact embrace her?

MASTER.

Yes.

JAMES.

I put this question, because I have remarked, that destiny is often capricious. You would say one moment, that it would be found to be false, and you discover the next, that it has spoken the truth. Then, sir, you think there is some symbolical presentiment which applies to my case; and, in spite

of yourself, you believe me threatened with a philosopher's death.

MASTER.

I confess I do: but, in order to get rid of this gloomy idea, cannot you . . .

JAMES.

Resume the history of my amours? . . .

James resumed the history of his amours. We had left him, I believe, with the surgeon,

SURGEON,

I am afraid you will be troubled with your knee for more than one day to come.

JAMES,

JAMES.

It will trouble me precisely the period which is decreed on high; but of what consequence is that at present?

SURGEON.

At so much a day for board, lodging, and attendance, it will make a considerable sum.

JAMES.

Doctor, the matter is not what sum it will amount to for the whole time, but how much a day?

SURGEON.

Five and twenty sous; would that be too much?

JAMES,

JAMES.

A great deal too much. Come, come, doctor, I am a poor devil; so let us strike off one half, and devise some plan as fast as possible to get me transported to your house.

SURGEON.

Twelve sous and a half; that is not much: you will surely make it thirteen?

JAMES.

Twelve sous and a half; thirteen sous . . . Agreed.

SURGEON.

And you are to pay daily?

JAMES.

That is the bargain.

SUR-

SURGEON.

It is, you must know, because I have a vixen of a wife who does not understand raillery.

JAMES.

Well, well, doctor, get me transported with all convenient speed to this vixen of a wife of yours.

SURGEON.

A month, at thirteen sous a day, is nineteen livres ten sous: you will make it the net twenty livres?

JAMES.

Twenty livres; be it so.

SURGEON.

You wish to be well boarded, well attended, speedily cured. Besides lodging,

ing, board and attendance, there will, perhaps, be medicines, linen; there will be . . .

JAMES.

What now?

SURGEON.

In faith, the whole will be well worth four and twenty livres.

JAMES.

Done, for the four and twenty; but no more of your amendments.

SURGEON.

A month at four and twenty livres; two months will be forty-eight livres; three months will be seventy-two. Oh! how pleased my wife would be if you would deposit, at your entry, the one half of these seventy-two livres!

JAMES

JAMES.

I consent.

SURGEON.

She would be still better satisfied . . .

JAMES.

If I were to pay for the quarter? I shall do it.

James proceeded. The surgeon went to find my host and hostess; informed them of our arrangement, and the next moment the husband, the wife, and the children, assembled round my bed, with a serene air: they made endless enquires after my health and my knee; extolled their neighbours, the surgeon and his wife, expressed the most ardent wishes for my welfare, the most polite

affability, an interest, an eagerness to serve me! nevertheless, the surgeon had not informed them that I had money; but they knew the man. He was to take me to his house, and they guessed that it was not for nothing. I paid what I owed these people, and made little presents to the children, which their father and mother did not allow to remain long in their hands. This was in the morning. My host went out to the fields; the hostess shut the door behind her, and went away. The children grieved, and, dissatisfied at being plundered, disappeared; and when I came to be taken out of bed, dressed, and adjusted upon my litter, there was nobody at hand but the doctor, who fell a crying with all his might, though there was nobody within hearing.

MASTER.

And James, who is fond of speaking to himself, probably observed, Never pay before hand, if you do not wish to be ill served.

JAMES.

No, my Master; this was no time to moralize, but rather a time to fall into a passion, and to swear. I lost all temper; I swore; afterwards I was reduced to moralize; and, while I was moralising, the doctor, who had left me alone, returned with two peasants whom he had hired to transport me, and at my expence, a circumstance of which he did not allow me to remain ignorant. These men discharged all the offices necessary to my installation, upon a kind of litter, which they made with a blanket stretched upon poles.

MASTER.

God be praised, you have now got into the surgeon's house, and fallen in love with the doctor's wife or daughter.

JAMES.

I suspect, my Master, that you are mistaken.

MASTER.

And you imagine that I should pass three months in the doctor's house without hearing one word of your amours! Ah! James, that is impossible. Omit, I beseech you, both the description of the house, and the character of the doctor, the humour of his wife, and the progress of your cure; leap, leap over all that. To the point, let us proceed to the point: suppose your

your knee almost well, yourself in good health, and in love.

JAMES.

I am in love then, since you insist upon knowing.

MASTER.

And with whom are you in love?

JAMES.

A tall brown girl, of sixteen, perfectly handsome; with large black eyes, little mouth, like vermillion, beautiful arms, pretty hands! . . Ah! my Master, what pretty hands! . . . Those very hands . . .

MASTER.

You imagine you hold them still.

JAMES.

Those very hands have you taken, and held many a time by stealth; and it only depended upon them, that you might not have done with her whatever you pleased.

MASTER.

Upon my faith, James, I did not expect that.

JAMES.

No more did I.

MASTER.

Reflect upon it as much as I please, I can recollect neither the tall brown girl, nor the pretty hands. Endeavour to explain yourself.

JAMES,

JAMES.

I agree; but it is upon condition that we return directly back again to the house of the surgeon.

MASTER.

Do you believe that it was decreed on high?

JAMES.

You yourself must show me that; but it is decreed on high that *qui va piano va sano*.

MASTER.

And that *qui va sano; va lontano*, and I should like much to get there.

JAMES.

Well, what have you resolved to do?

MASTER.

MASTER.

Whatever you please.

JAMES.

If so, conceive us in the house of the surgeon; it was decreed on high that we should return. The doctor, his wife, and his children, contrived so well to drain my purse, by every species of petty theft, that they had at last succeeded. The cure of my knee appeared to be considerably advanced, without being so in reality: the wound was pretty nearly closed; I was able to go abroad with the assistance of a crutch, and I had still eighteen francs remaining. No people are so fond of speaking as stutterers; none so fond of walking as cripples. One day in autumn, upon a fine afternoon, I intend-

ed a long walk; from the village where I lived to the next, the distance was about two leagues.

MASTER.

And what was the name of this village?

JAMES.

Should I name it, you would know the whole matter. When I arrived there, I went into a tavern, rested myself, and took some refreshment; day began to fall, and I was preparing to set out for my lodging, when, from the house in which I was, I heard a woman uttering piercing cries. She was sitting upon the ground, tearing her hair, and, pointing to the fragments of a large pitcher, said; I am undone! I am undone for a month to come! and, in

that

that time, who will support my poor children? The intendant, who has a heart harder than flint, will not bate me a single sous. How unfortunate I am! I am ruined! I am ruined!... Every body lamented her situation; nothing was to be heard around her but, Poor woman! Yet no one put his hand into his pocket. I approached her without ceremony, and said, Good woman, what has befallen you? —What has befallen me! don't you see? I was sent to purchase a pitcher of oil; I made a false step, fell, my pitcher is broken to pieces, and there is the oil it contained... At this moment, the woman's little children came up. They were almost naked, and the wretched garb of the mother shewed all the misery of the family. The mother and the children began a crying.

Such

Such as I am, ten times less would have been sufficient to affect me; my bowels were moved with compassion, the tears started into my eyes. I asked the woman in a faltering tone, what was the value of the oil in the pitcher? What is the value, replied she, raising her hands? Nine livres; more than I shall be able to earn in a month . . . Instantly untying my purse, and throwing her two crown pieces, Hold, said I, there are a dozen . . . and, without waiting for her acknowledgment, I took the road to the village.

MASTER.

James, you here performed a noble action.

JAMES.

I did a foolish one, begging your pardon. I had not proceeded an hundred

dred paces from the village, when I said so to myself. Before I was half way, I repeated it. Arrived at the house of my surgeon with my pocket empty, I felt it still worse.

MASTER.

You may have been right, and my praises were then as misplaced as your compassion . . . No, no, James, I persist in my first judgment, and it is, forgetting the necessity of your own situation, that constitutes the principal merit of your action. I perceive the consequences; you are going to be exposed to the inhumanity of the surgeon and his wife; they will turn you out of doors; but, though you had died at their door on a dunghill, upon that dunghill you should have been satisfied with your conduct.

JAMES.

JAMES.

My Master, I have scarcely so much courage as that comes to. I jogged along with much ado; and, since I must confess it, regretting my two crowns, which were gone without the possibility of recovery, and spoiling, by my regret, the action I had performed: I was at an equal distance from the two villages, and day was quite gone, when three ruffians sprung from the thicket by which the road was skirted, rummaged my pockets, and were astonished to find about me so little money as there was. They had reckoned upon a richer booty; seeing the charity I had bestowed at the village; they had imagined that he who could so easily give away a half louis, must have a score of them behind. Enraged at finding

finding their hopes disappoined, and having exposed themselves to the danger of getting their bones broken upon a scaffold for a few halfpence, should I inform against them, and should they be seized and convicted upon my evidence, they hesitated whether they should not murder me. Fortunately they heard some noise, and took to their heels, and I came off for a few contusions which I received in the fall, and while they robbed me. The ruffians having retired, I proceeded. I regained the village as well as I could, and arrived, at two in the morning, pale and exhausted; the pain in my knee greatly increased, and aching in different places from the blows I had sustained. The doctor . . . Master, what is the master with you? You

grind your teeth; you shake as if you were in presence of an enemy.

MASTER.

So in fact I am. My sword in my hand, I rush upon your robbers, and take vengeance for the injury you have suffered. Tell me then, how he, who is the author of the grand register, could have decreed, that such should be the reward of a generous action? Why even I, who am a miserable compound of defects, espouse your cause, while he who, with tranquillity, has seen you attacked, knocked down, mal-treated, trodden under foot; he who is denominated the assemblage of all perfection!

JAMES.

Hush, hush, Master; what you now say savours of fire and brimstone.

MASTER.

MASTER.

What are you looking at?

JAMES.

I am looking to see if there is no person round us who could hear you . . . The doctor felt my purse, and found that I was feverish. I went to bed without mentioning my adventure, musing upon my couch, having to deal with two souls, great God! what souls! without a single sous, and firmly expecting, that next day, when I awoke, I should be dunned for the price which had been stipulated to be paid every day.

Here the Master threw his arms round the servant's neck, exclaiming; My poor James! what are you to do? What

What is to become of you? Your situation terrifies me.

JAMES.

Cheer up, Master, here I am.

MASTER.

I did not think of that; I was just now by your side in the doctor's house, at the moment you awoke, and when they came to ask you for money.

JAMES.

Master, in life we do not know at what to rejoice, nor at what to grieve. Good produces evil, and evil produces good. We proceed in the dark subject to what is decreed on high, equally frantic in our wishes, in our joy, and our affliction. When I weep, I often discover that I am a fool.

MASTER.

And when you laugh?

JAMES.

I find also that I am a fool; yet I cannot help weeping or laughing and it is this that enrages me. I have an hundred times endeavoured . . . I did not shut my eyes the whole night . . .

MASTER.

No, no, tell me what you have endeavoured.

JAMES.

To disregard every thing that happens. Ah! could I but have succeeded!

MASTER.

What should you have gained by it?

JAMES.

JAMES.

I should have rid myself of care, no longer have wanted any thing, rendered myself completely my own master, and been as well with my head laid upon a stone at the corner of a street as upon a downy pillow. Such I sometimes am; but the devil is that it does not continue, and though firm and steady as a rock, upon great occasions it often happens that a slight contradiction, a trifle, disconcerts me, till I exhibit the most extravagant expressions of rage. I have given up this, I have adopted the plan of being contented with my situation whatever it is, and I have found, upon a little reflection, that it comes nearly to the same thing, and then I add, of what consequence is it how we are? This is a

kind of resignation more easy and more convenient.

MASTER.

With regard to its being more convenient that is certain.

JAMES.

In the morning the surgeon drew my curtains, and said: Come my friend, your knee, for I am obliged to go from home.—Doctor, replied I, in a piteous tone, I am drowsy.—So much the better, it is a good sign.—Allow me to sleep, I don't care for being dressed.—There won't be much harm though you are not, sleep on . . . —Saying this, he draws my curtains, but I cannot sleep. An hour after this his wife drew my curtains, and said, Come my friend take your toast and tea.—Madam, said I in a piteous tone, I feel no appetite.—Eat,

eat,

eat, you shall pay neither more nor less. —I don't chuse to eat.—So much the better; this will serve for the children and me. With this she again draws my curtains, calls her children who fall on and dispatch my tea and toast.

Reader, should I here make a pause, and resume the history of the man with the single shirt, because he had only one body at a time, I would fain know what you would think? You will say that I have involved myself in a dilemma, as Voltaire would say, or vulgarly have got into an alley, from which I know not how to escape, and that I have recourse to a story invented merely for amusement, in order to gain time and to devise some means of extricating myself from that which I have begun. In truth, reader, you are mistaken upon

every point; I know very well how James is to be relieved from his distress, and that what I am going to tell you of Gousse, the man with only one shirt at a time, because he had only one body at a time, is by no means a fiction.

One day in Whitsuntide, in the morning, I received a note from Gousse, in which he begged me to visit him in a prison where he was confined. While I was dressing, I mused upon his adventure, and I supposed that his taylor, his baker, his wine-merchant or his landlord, had obtained and executed a writ against him. I arrived and found him in the common room, along with other persons of a suspicious appearance. I asked him who these people were.—The old man, whom you see with the spectacles upon his nose, is a man of abilities who

is eminently skilled in calculations, and who endeavours to make his accounts balance with the registers which he copies. This is a difficult matter, we have talked of it, but I doubt not he will succeed. And that other?—He is a fool.—But besides?--A fool who had invented a machine to forge public notes, a very bad machine, a defective machine, wrong in twenty places.—And the third in livery and playing upon a bass. He is only here but to wait till evening or to morrow morning; for his affair is of no consequence, he will be transferred to the Bicêtre.—And you? I? My business is still of less importance. After this answer he lays his cap upon the bed, and immediately his three companions disappeared. When I entered, I found Gousse in his night gown, seated at a small table, drawing geome-

trical figures, and labouring with as much tranquillity as if he had been in his own house. We were now alone. Pray what are you doing here?—I; I work, as you see.—And who has lodged you here?—Myself.—How! yourself?—Yes, myself, sir.—And how did you manage to do this?—Just as I should have done with any other person. I commenced a suit against myself, gained it, and, in consequence of the sentence which I obtained, and the decree which followed, I was apprehended and carried here.—Are you mad?—No, sir, I have told you the matter as it stands.—Could you not institute another action against yourself, gain it, and, in consequence of another sentence and another decree, procure your enlargement?—No, sir.

Gousse had a handsome female servant who enjoyed his favours more frequently than his wife. This unequal distribution had troubled domestic peace. Although nothing was more difficult than to torment this man, one who, of all the world was least alarmed at noise, he adopted the measure of quitting his wife and living with his servant. But his whole fortune consisted in furniture, instruments, drawings, and other moveables, and he preferred leaving his wife utterly destitute to going away with his hands empty. In consequence of this resolution, he conceived the following plan. It was to give bills to his servant, who was to prosecute him for the payment, and obtain a warrant for the arrest and sale of his effects, which were to be conveyed from the bridge of St. Michael to the lodging

where

where he proposed to fix himself along with her. He is enchanted with the idea, he draws out the bills, assigns himself over, and employs two attornies. Conceive him running from the one to the other, prosecuting himself with all possible keenness, attacking with vigour, and defending himself without sincerity; conceive him condemned to pay all the penalties enacted by the law, imagine him, seizing in idea upon every thing in the house; but the event did not turn out exactly as he had projected. He had to do with a very cunning jade, who, in place of putting an execution upon his moveables, laid hold of his person, caused him to be apprehended and thrown into prison; so that however extravagant were the enigmatical answers he had returned to my questions, they nevertheless were true.

While

While I was recounting this history which you will take for a fiction . . .— But that of the man in livery who was scraping upon the bass? Reader, I promise to present you with it; upon my honour, you shall not lose it; but allow me to return to James and his Master. James and his Master had reached the stage where they meant to pass the night. It was late, the gate of the city was shut, and they had been obliged to stop in the suburbs. There I hear an uproar . . .—You hear! You were not there, what have we to do with you? It is true.—Alas! James and his Master . . . A hideous uproar is heard. I see two men . . .—You see nothing at all, what have you to do in the business? You were not present.—It is true. There were two men conversing with great composure at the door of

the

the chamber which they occupied, a woman with her hands on her sides, poured out upon them a torrent of abuse, and James endeavoured to appease her, while she no more regarded his pacific remonstrances than the two persons she addressed paid attention to her invectives. Come, my good woman, said James, patience; don't be in a passion; let us see what is the matter? These seem to me to be very civil gentlemen. They civil gentlemen! They are brutes, without pity, without humanity, without any feeling! Alas! what harm did poor Fanny do them to be thus mal-treated? She will be lame for it all the rest of her life.—The mischief, perhaps, is not so great as you imagine.—It was a dreadful blow, I tell you; she will be lame for it.—You should examine it: send, and

call

call a surgeon.—It is already done.—Put her to bed.—So she is, and utters such cries as would pierce your very heart. My poor Fanny! . . . Amid these lamentations, the bell rang from one of the rooms, and some people cried, hostess! some wine. She answered, Coming. The bell rang from another part of the house, and the guests called, hostess, a cloth . . . She answered, Coming.—Cutlets and duck?—Coming.—A beer pot; a chamber pot?—Coming, coming.—And, from another part of the house, a person, in a furious passion, roared, Cursed babbler! confounded babbler! what the devil is your business to interfere? Are you determined to make me wait till to-morrow? James, James! . . . The hostess, a little recovered from her grief and her resentment, says to James, Sir, leave me;

you are too obliging.—James, James! —Go, therefore, it is your Master, I believe, who calls you.—James, James! . . . It was, indeed, no other man than James's Master, who had undressed by himself, who was dying of hunger, and out of all temper at being neglected. James ascended the stairs, and, a moment after James, the landlady, who in truth had a most disconsolate air. Sir, said she to James's Master, I beg you ten thousand pardons; a thousand things occur in life to which we cannot readily submit. What would you please to have? I have chickens, pigeons, an excellent back of a hare, and rabbits; this is the country for fine rabbits. Would you prefer water fowl? James gave orders for his Master's supper, as he would have done for his own, according to custom. Supper

was

was served up, and, continuing his repast, Jamas's Master said to him, Well, what the devil were you doing below?

JAMES.

Perhaps good, perhaps harm, who knows?

MASTER.

And what good, and what harm were you doing below?

JAMES.

I prevented this woman from getting herself drubbed by two men who are below, and who at least have broken a female servant's arm.

MASTER.

And perhaps it had been well for her had she got a drubbing . . .

JAMES.

JAMES.

For twenty reasons, every one better than another. One of the greatest pieces of good fortune that ever happened to me in my life, to me who speak to you . . .

MASTER.

Was getting yourself beaten ? . . . (Drinks).

JAMES.

Yes, sir, beaten, knocked down upon the high way, by night ; returning from the village, as I told you, after having performed, in my opinion, a very foolish thing, and, in yours, the noble action of giving away my money.

MASTER.

MASTER.

I recollect . . . (drinks). But what was the origin of the quarrel which you accommodated below, and of the bad treatment which the landlady's daughter, or servant, received ?

JAMES.

Upon my faith, that I don't know.

MASTER.

You are then unacquainted with the origin of the business in which you interfere! James, this conduct is consistent neither with prudence, with justice, nor with the principles . . (drinks).

JAMES.

I know not what principles are, but rules which we prescribe to others, from

our own feelings; I think one way, yet I cannot help acting another. All your sermons are like the preambles to the royal edicts. All preachers wish their lessons to be put in practice, because we should be the better if we followed them; but these gentlemen have a fair game to play. Virtue . . .

MASTER.

Virtue, James, is a good thing; both the good and bad speak well of it . . . (drinks).

JAMES.

For both of them find their account in doing so.

MASTER.

And how did it turn out so fortunate for you to be knocked down?

JAMES.

JAMES.

It is late; you have made a good supper; so have I. We are both fatigued, believe me; let us go to bed.

MASTER.

We cannot yet; the hostess has something to bring. Till she comes, resume the history of your amours.

JAMES.

Where about was I? I beseech you, for this time, and every other, to set me a going.

MASTER.

I take charge of that, and, to enter upon my function of prompter, you were in bed, destitute of money, greatly incommoded with the state of your

person, while the doctor's wife and her children eat up your tea and toast.

JAMES.

Here a coach was heard to stop at the door of the house. A servant entered, and asked, Does not there lodge here a poor man, a soldier, who walks upon a crutch, who returned last night from the next village ?—Yes, answered the doctor's wife; what do you want with him ?—To carry him away with us in the coach.—He is in that bed, draw the curtains and speak to him.

James was exactly here when the hostess entered, and said; What do you chuse to have as a desert ? The Master answered, Whatever you have got. The hostess, without taking the trouble to go down stairs, called from the room,

Nanny, bring some fruit, biscuits and confections . . . At the word Nanny, James said, aside to himself; Ah! this is the girl who has been so ill-treated; we must at least appear to be in a passion . . . And the Master said to the hostess, You seemed but now to be sadly vexed!

HOSTESS.

And who would not have been vexed? The poor creature had done nothing to offend them. No sooner had she entered the room than I heard her cry; but such cries . . . Thank God, I am now a little heartened; the surgeon says it will be nothing: she has, however, two large contusions, one upon the head, the other upon the shoulder.

MASTER.

Have you had her long?

HOSTESS.

A fortnight at most. She had been deserted at the next stage.

MASTER.

How! deserted?

HOSTESS.

Aye, my God! was she! There are people in the world harder than flint. She was nearly drowned passing the river which runs just by; she came here, as if by a miracle, and I received her in charity.

MASTER.

How old is she?

HOSTESS.

HOSTESS.

I believe she is more than a year and a half . . .

At these words James burst into a loud laugh, and exclaimed: It is a bitch !

HOSTESS.

The prettiest in the world, I would not give my Fanny for ten louis. My poor Fanny ! . . .

MASTER.

Madam is then tender hearted.

HOSTESS.

You are right. I am attached to my beasts and to my domestics.

MASTER

MASTER.

It is very proper. And who are they that so sadly ill treated your Fanny?

HOSTESS.

Two citizens of the next town. They whisper each other perpetually, they imagine that nobody knows what they say, and that we are ignorant of their adventure. It is not more than three hours since they have been here, and I have not missed a word of their business. It is very diverting, and were you not in a greater hurry to go to bed than I am, I would tell it you just as their domestic told it to my servant who happened to be his country woman, who repeated it to my husband, who repeated it to me. The mother in law of the youngest passed this way not three months ago. She

was

was going much against her inclination to a country convent, where she did not live to turn grey headed; she died there, and this is the reason why our young men are in mourning ... But you see, without being sensible of it, I have got on the thread of their story. Good night, gentlemen, and good rest. You found the wine good?

MASTER.

Very good.

HOSTESS.

Were you pleased with your supper?

MASTER.

Very well pleased, although your spinnage was somewhat dirty.

HOSTESS.

I sometimes am a little aukward; however, you shall have an excellent bed and be laid in a pair of clean sheets. We never present them twice in this house.

With this the hostess withdrew, and James and his Master went to bed smiling at the *qui pro quo* which had led them to take a bitch for the daughter, or servant of the house, and the passion of the hostess for a stray bitch which she had only a fortnight in her possession. James said to his Master, while tying the string of his night cap, I will lay a wager, that of all the living creatures,

tures in the inn, this woman loves only her Fanny . . . His Master answered: That is very possible, James; but let us go to sleep.

END OF VOL. I.